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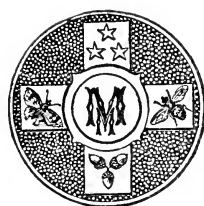
History of Christian missions during the







A HISTORY  
OF  
CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.



A HISTORY  
OF  
CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

DURING

*The Middle Ages.*

BY

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## PREFACE.

THE present Work in its original form obtained the Maitland Prize for the year 1861, when the following subject was proposed: "The several efforts made during the Middle Ages to propagate the Gospel, considered with reference to the external and internal condition of the Christian Church at the time."

In deference to the wishes of the Examiners the publication of the work has been postponed somewhat beyond the usual period, in order that the numerous references might be verified and expanded.

This I have endeavoured to do to the best of my power, amidst many other and more pressing duties, and have taken the opportunity also of amplifying details, especially in the xvi<sup>th</sup> and xvii<sup>th</sup> Chapters, which I was originally prevented by a severe illness from presenting otherwise than in a meagre outline.

The quotations which occur from time to time in the notes, I have given, as far as possible, from the original authorities, and I trust I have carefully acknowledged my obligations to others, where I have been unable to consult the originals.

Although I cannot claim to have recorded many facts in these pages that may not be found in the larger Ecclesiastical Histories, yet I am not aware of any work, in the English language, in which the various efforts made during the Middle Ages to propagate the Gospel are grouped together and presented at one view.

The Mediæval period, indeed, has been but little represented in modern accounts of Christian missions, and yet it was fertile in noble and heroic men, who laid, always in self-denial and self-sacrifice, sometimes in martyrdom and blood, the foundations of many of the Churches of modern Europe. The age to which they belonged was not the age of the nineteenth century; their thoughts were not our thoughts, nor their ways our ways; but while there is much to blame, there is much to admire in their operations; and the modern missionary in our numerous Colonial Dioceses will perhaps see a reflection of his own trials and difficulties, of his own hopes and aspirations, in the life and labours of the founder of the far-famed monastery of Iona, of the monk of Nutescelle, of the Apostle of Denmark, or the enthusiastic Raymond Lull.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ζύμη.

S. MATT. xiii. 33.

ON two occasions in the recorded history of the Apostle Paul, we behold him brought into contact with pure barbarism. The first<sup>1</sup> is that familiar one, when having been driven from the great towns of central Asia Minor, he had in company with Barnabas, penetrated into the region of Lystra and Derbe. The district here indicated was, as is known to all, inhabited by a rude population, amongst whom the civilization of imperial Rome had scarcely penetrated. The natives of these two little towns situated amidst the bare and barren steppes of Lycaonia, spoke a dialect of their own, and were addicted to a rude and primitive superstition. Theirs was not the philosophical faith of the educated classes at Rome or Athens. It was the superstition of simple pagan villagers on whom the Jewish synagogue had produced little or no impression.

INTRODUCTION.

*Apostolic contact with pure barbarism.*

*St Paul at (i) Lystra.*

Under such circumstances, it is interesting to notice how the Christian message found an access to their hearts. Obviously the great Apostle could appeal neither to prophecies from their own Scriptures, as in the synagogues of Antioch and Iconium, nor to certain sayings of their own poets, as on Mars' Hill. But the Providence of God supplied a vehicle of communication.

Amongst the groups which had gathered round the Apostle, and whom he was addressing with his wonted earnestness and zeal, was a man who had been a cripple

<sup>1</sup> Acts xiv. 6.

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from his birth. Perceiving that he had faith to be healed the Apostle bade him rise up and walk. Power accompanied the spoken word: he stood upright on his feet and was made whole. Such a cure, of such a man, in such a manner, could not fail to arouse astonishment and awaken interest. The news soon spread through the place, and the inhabitants not unmindful, it may be, of the well-known traditions of the neighbourhood, rushed to the conclusion that supernatural powers were present among them, that their tutelary deities had come down in the likeness of men. What followed is a familiar tale. Bringing oxen and garlands to the temple before the town-gates, they would have offered sacrifice to the marvellous strangers, had they not been prevented by the Apostles, who straightway began to implore them to turn away from their dumb idols, and to serve the true God, the Creator of all things. But the impression made was on the surface only, and soon passed away. The inveterate enemies of the Apostles arrived, and persuaded the people that they were only the victims of diabolical magic, and the effect was instantaneous. The men, whom a moment before they had been on the point of worshipping, were driven ignominiously from the place.

(ii) *Malta.*

On the second occasion<sup>1</sup> the scene shifts to the island of Malta. The morning after the shipwreck has just begun to break, and St Paul, now a prisoner bound for Rome, has reached the shore with his companions. Here, too, the people he encountered were of a rude and simple character. But they showed no little kindness towards the drenched and shivering crew, and, as they kindled the welcome fire upon the sea-beach, the interest of the narrative again centres round the Apostle. Foremost, as always, in seeking the general good he was actively engaged in gathering sticks for the fire, when a viper sprung from the heap and fastened on his hand. The first thought of

<sup>1</sup> Acts xxviii. 1.



the islanders, as they beheld the venomous creature, was that the Apostle was without doubt a murderer, who, though he had escaped the sea, could not escape the divine Nemesis. But he had no sooner shaken off the creature, and felt no harm, than they regarded him as a god; nor was their belief in his exalted character likely to be weakened by what subsequently took place—the cure of the father of the governor of the island, and of many others afflicted with divers maladies.

These two instances of the earliest meeting of the Apostle Paul with simple paganism are deserving of more than a passing glance. They serve to introduce us to the consideration of the missionary efforts of the Mediæval Church, which also had to deal with rude and simple paganism. *Its chief features.* Much that we observe here we shall observe again and again; features, incidents, traits of character will repeat themselves. Wherever we go we shall find that, as in those little villages amidst the dreary regions of Lycaonia, and that little island of the Mediterranean, men have never been able to exist without some form of religion; that, however degraded, they have never got rid of the conviction, that beyond and above the powers of nature there is One who visits the earth, interposes in the affairs of men, and has in some mysterious way connected inextricably guilt and retribution, sin and pain. They may entertain very indistinct, very contradictory notions on these points, but in some form or other we shall find them lying at the bottom of their hearts,—the root and origin of all natural religion, and supplying the link between the soul of man and the message of the Gospel. Wherever again our enquiries will lead us, we shall notice the weakness of this form of natural religion; how, though it may have risen to the conception of the human attributes of deity, it too often recognises the divine presence only in the marvellous and mysterious,—when the cripple

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stands upon his feet, or the serpent falls off the Apostle's arm,—but forgets that the same power is ever present in common blessings,—the fertilizing rain, or the ripening harvest. Wherever our enquiries will lead us, we shall further notice the effect of this adoration only of the wonderful, in the superficial religious excitement, and the quick revulsion of thought and feeling, when no deep impression has been made upon the heart, which it was the painful lot even of an Apostle to experience, and which has often so sadly discouraged the work of the missionary in every age.

*Limits of the "®  
Church during  
the first Four  
Centuries.*

Up to the period when our enquiries commence, the Christian Church had not, except in the extreme East, extended her conquests far beyond the limits of the Roman Empire. Her territorial field may be said to have mainly included the countries around the Mediterranean Sea—Palestine, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Southern Gaul, Egypt, and Numidia—the very centre of the old world and its heathen culture. Within this area the kingdom of God had made its way silently and “without observation.” Its going forth had not been proclaimed on the house-top or in the market-place. The Word had indeed been “running very swiftly,” but it was the Word of Him whose earthly life had been spent in an obscure village of Palestine, and who had died the death of the malefactor and the slave. The “mustard seed,” the “hidden leaven,” had been true figures of its progress, overlooked by the world yet penetrating the world with its secret and subduing force. There is a mystery, as has been often observed, about the planting of the Church in various places<sup>1</sup>. Who knows the origin of the congregation already at Damascus when the disciple of Gamaliel went thither breathing forth threatening and slaughter against those of “the way”? Who can recount the circumstances to which Timothy's mother and grandmother owed their knowledge of the

<sup>1</sup> Blunt's *First Three Centuries*, p. 150.

truth? Who can throw light on the planting of that Church in Rome to which the great Apostle addresses so many salutations? Who, again, so first laboured in planting the Church of Gaul, that in the second and third centuries a Pothinus and an Irenæus could enter into their labours? Who, lastly, can throw any certain light on the origin of the early British Churches?

But, though thus hidden, it was not long before the leaven began to vivify and pervade the whole mass of society, before what had been the consolation of the slave, or the fugitive in the catacombs, became the creed of the statesman and the magistrate. In spite of contempt and outrage the Gospel message commended itself to the hearts of men. Philosophers might scoff at the first believers; politicians might suspect them; the populace might pursue them with ferocious yells; a Nero might persecute them when goaded on by the malicious misrepresentations of the Jews; a Hadrian and a Trajan, as deeming them guilty of insubordination and treason; a Marcus Aurelius and a Decius, from horror at the public calamities of the empire; a Diocletian, as recognising in the new and mysterious society a formidable rival to be put down and crushed; but there were at all times the few to whom the new faith spake "as never man spake;" there were always the children by whom its "wisdom was justified." The story of Justin Martyr, after trying everything else in vain, commended by the old man on the seashore to enquire into the "new philosophy," is, no doubt, the story of many<sup>1</sup>. And so the still small voice made itself heard, and the "weakness" of God proved itself "stronger than man." The symbol of the most degrading punishment the Roman could inflict on the malefactor and the slave became the symbol of an empire's creed, and was blazoned on the conqueror's banner.

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TION.*Its vitality  
in spite  
of persecution.*

<sup>1</sup> See Neander's *Church History*, I. 44.

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TION.*Causes of the  
Church's  
triumph.*

And what had been the weapons of the Church in winning this signal triumph over a hostile religion and a hostile government, powerful in all its material appliances, and the time-honoured prestige of its name? What had been the influences which had placed her progress in exact correspondence with the decline of so potent an adversary? They had been direct and they had been indirect. Among the latter we may include the utter dissatisfaction of men with the existing religious and philosophical systems, and the insufficiency and decay of heathenism, which, broken up into an infinity of sects and persuasions, had taken deep root neither in the intellect, the conscience, nor the affections of mankind<sup>1</sup>. Art and Literature, Philosophy and Politics, had done their utmost, and yet man had not attained that which he felt he needed. His soul still thirsted, it had reached no fountain of "living water." After years of conflict and enquiry, he was still lost on the shoreless ocean of uncertainty. Self-convicted of his impotency to regenerate himself, he cried out with Seneca, *O that one would stretch out his hand*<sup>2</sup>, and sighed for relief from the endless strife of discordant systems. And to this deep-felt want the Gospel, the message of glad tidings, responded, and thus exerted a direct, a divine, influence. It calmed the clashing creeds of heathenism by proclaiming God as One; it attracted the hearts of men by its revelation of His true character as a Father; it proclaimed the glad tidings of His infinite Love as displayed in the incarnation of His Eternal Son; it assuaged the sense of guilt, the craving for restoration, by pointing to the Sacrifice of the Cross; it strengthened the power of hope by bringing to light

<sup>1</sup> See De Pressense's *Religions before Christ*, p. 188. Kurtz's *Church History*, p. 57. Schaaf, *Apost. Hist.* p. 386.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca, *Ep.* lii.: "Stultitia, in-

quis, est: cui nihil constat, nihil diu placet. Sed quomodo, aut quando nos ab ea revellemus: Nemo per se satis valet: oportet manum aliquis porrigat, aliquis educat."

life and immortality, and the glory of the world to come. And while thus it proved its adaptation to the wants of men, it manifested its Divine Power sometimes in miracles and signs, the echoes of the Apostolic age, often in the constancy of martyrs under persecution, oftener in the upright walk, the holiness, and charity of its believers and teachers. Evangelists like Pantænus and Frumentius proclaimed abroad its message from a God of Love, and adorned its doctrines by the sincerity and devotion of their lives; and what they effected directly was carried forward indirectly by Christian captives, Christian colonists, Christian soldiers. Apologists, again, like Irenæus and Justin, Cyprian and Athenagoras, Origen and Tertullian, justified its claims to be the "true philosophy;" the Fathers of the East moulded its creeds; the Empire of the West bequeathed to it its organization and its laws; with Constantine it was publicly recognised as the religion of the State; with Gratian and Theodosius its supremacy was established.

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But when the Iron Kingdom had run its race, the territorial field of the Church was to be widened, it was to spread Westward, and Northward, and Eastward; and now a very different element was proposed to the energies of the Christian teachers. As the Roman Empire sank beneath her feet, its last embers trampled out by Alaric, the Church found herself confronted with numberless hordes, that had long been gathering afar off in their native wilds, and were now to be precipitated over the entire face of Europe. Strange, indeed, in language and customs and mode of life, were the nations which now poured forth to fill the abyss of servitude and corruption in which the Roman Empire had disappeared, and to infuse new life-blood into an effete civilization. Celt and Teuton, Slave and Hun followed each other in quick succession, each presenting to the Church some new element to be

*Incoming of the  
new races.*

controlled and brought into subjection. She was now called to allay these agitated elements of society, to introduce some degree of order, to teach the nations a higher faith than a savage form of nature worship, to purify and refine their recklessness, independence, and uncontrollable love of liberty, to fit them to become the members of an enlightened Christendom.

It is from this point then that we set out; at this critical period we take our stand to watch and see, how when the foundations of the great deep seemed to be broken up, and chaos to have come back to earth, the Christian Church did not falter, but girded herself for her great mission, and strove to win over to the fold of Christ the dark masses of heathendom that surrounded her. Mindful of the difficulties she had to encounter in making this effort, of the features of the times when it was made, of the interruptions, checks, vicissitudes, and delays which would be inevitably incident thereto, we shall learn not to expect too much from men who partook of the common infirmities of our nature, and the vices characteristic of their age. We shall rather rejoice to trace from time to time the fulfilment of the Divine Word, *Behold I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world*, and to see how in conformity therewith, the leaven destined to pervade and quicken the whole mass of European society was never *altogether* inert, impassive, or ineffectual.

## CHAPTER I.



### THE MISSION-FIELD OF THE MIDDLE AGES.

Quum barbaries penitus commota gementem  
Irrueret Rhodopen, et mixto turbine gentis,  
Jam deserta suas in nos transfunderet Arctos.—CLAUDIAN.

IN the present chapter we shall attempt to survey what CHAP. I.  
may be termed *the mission-field of the Middle Ages*, and  
to notice some of the more striking characteristics, social,  
moral, and religious, of the nations which established  
themselves upon the ruins of the Roman Empire, and now  
awaited the missionary zeal of the Christian Church. As  
an outline is all that we can possibly attempt, we may,  
sinking minor divergences of race, and regarding them  
solely in their moral and religious aspects, arrange these  
nations under the several groups of Celts, Teutons, and  
Slaves.

With the first group indeed we shall be but partially i. *The Celt.*  
concerned. The people it includes had already in a great  
measure, before the time when our enquiries commence,  
become amalgamated with their Roman conquerors, and  
shared their manners, institutions, and mode of life: still  
they formed that portion of the mission-field into which  
the Apostle of Ireland and his disciples first entered, and  
the members of the churches thus founded, were so pre-  
eminent for missionary zeal in England and the continent,  
that they cannot be wholly passed by.

## CHAP. I.

ii. *The Teuton.*

With the Teuton we shall be mainly concerned in our account of the propagation of the Gospel in our own island, and in Southern and Northern Germany. Under this generic term we shall include also the races, more developed perhaps, but for all purposes the same in moral character and religious belief, which peopled the Scandinavian continent, and so long resisted the efforts of their own princes and Christian missionaries to induce them to lay aside their old Teutonic faith.

iii. *The Slave.*

The Slavonic group will arrest our attention when we describe the missionary exertions of the Eastern Church in Bulgaria, Bohemia, and Russia, or of her Western rival in Pomerania, Prussia, and the neighbouring countries. The well-known inaction of the Church of Constantinople in missionary work confines us mainly to the West, and to the triumphs of Latin Christianity<sup>1</sup>. At the extinction of paganism, the Eastern churches had almost ceased to be aggressive, or creative; and with the exception of the missions of Ulphilas to the Goths, of Cyril and Methodius to Moscow, of the Nestorians in Persia, India, and perhaps to lands still further East, they present but little to detain us, and were, as it has been strikingly said, "but the temporary halting-place of the great spiritual migration, which from the day that Abraham turned his face away from the rising sun, has been stepping steadily westward<sup>2</sup>."

i. *The Celt.*

1. We begin then with the Celts. At a very early period in her history, as is known to all, Rome had encountered the Cymry, or the Gael. The name of Brennus recalls a scene in her history, when, in spite of the patriotic

<sup>1</sup> Milman's *Latin Christianity*, i.  
3. "Islamism curtailed the Eastern Church," remarks Hardwick, "on all sides, but awoke not a primitive devotion in its members, nor injected a fresh stock of energy and health:

it had already entered in the 7th century upon the calm and protracted period of its decline."—Hardwick's *Church History, Middle Age*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley's *Lectures on Ecclesiastical History*, p. 23.



contradictions of her own historians, she was very nearly succumbing before those gigantic warriors, whose butchery of her senators in the capitol was handed down from generation to generation, in legend and in song. From this day forward, these half-naked tribes were a continual source of terror. They swarmed into Greece, attempted to sack Delphi, and founded kingdoms in Asia Minor. During the first Punic war the Roman legionary found them protecting Carthaginian cities in Sicily; encountered them in the second serving, under the banner of Hannibal, on the bloody fields of Thrasymene and Cannæ. The terrible reverse at Tolosa roused the wrath of the avenger Marius, and after two tremendous engagements at Pourrières and Vercelli, in which Rome had a foretaste of what was in store for her degenerate emperors, the terrible soldier of Arpinum succeeded in warding off the barbaric inroads, and was saluted as a third founder of Rome. But it was during the campaigns of Cæsar, which lasted upwards of fourteen years, and cost him two millions of men, that the Celtic nations became really known, being amalgamated with the fortunes and fate of the Italian capital. The commentaries of this great commander give us a vivid idea of the impression they made upon him; and he has described with minute accuracy their gigantic stature, fair complexions, enormous muscular strength, and love of personal decoration. Fond of war, hot in temper, but simple and void of malice, they knew little of that personal liberty which was the proud characteristic of the Teuton<sup>1</sup>. While the meanest Teuton was independent and free, the lower orders among the Celts were little better than in a state of slavery. All freedom and power centered in their chieftains.

<sup>1</sup> "Plebes pæne servorum habetur loco, quæ nihil audet per se, nullo adhibetur consilio." Cæs. *de B. G.* VI. 13. On the physiological and

psychological features of the Teuton and the Celt, see Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 23.

## CHAP. I.

*The Druids.*

The same great commander has given us the fullest and clearest account of the Druids<sup>1</sup>, the all-powerful religious order of the Celtic tribes. Under their various divisions they were at once the ministers of a theocracy, and the judges and legislators of the people. Enjoying an immunity from service in the army and the obligation to pay taxes, they instructed the youth of the nation in the mysteries of learning, which they veiled in inviolable secrecy, and did not suffer to be committed to writing. The chief doctrine thus imparted was the immortality of the soul, or rather its transmigration into another body, an article of faith deemed of especial importance as an incentive to heroic virtue. To this cardinal doctrine was added instruction in the nature and motion of the heavenly bodies, the nature of things, and the power and greatness of the immortal gods.

It was the opinion of Cæsar, who assures us that the religious belief of Gaul and Britain were the same, that the latter was its birthplace, and that pilgrims from Gaul flocked thither as to an holy island. It is more probable that Druidism retained a more lasting hold over the colony than the mother country, traversed everywhere by the Roman legions. How powerful was its influence is attested by the constancy with which it was proscribed by successive Roman generals, and the fact that Suetonius Paulinus, convinced of the impossibility of subduing the Britons in any other way, penetrated into the sacred island of Mona, cutting down its sacred groves, and butchering its white-robed priests. But though the system thus received its death-blow in England, it lingered on for centuries in Ireland and the Scottish highlands. When we come to trace the missionary labours of the Apostle of Ireland and his disciples, we shall find proof that it still retained a portion of its once undisputed supremacy in

<sup>1</sup> Cæsar, *B. G.* VI. 14.

matters civil as well as ecclesiastical. The invariable use in the lives of the Irish saints of the word *magus* to express the Druidic profession, sufficiently illustrates their functions. In the Book of Armagh the monarch of Ireland is represented, at the arrival of St Patrick, as having in his service his soothsayers and magicians, his augurs and diviners<sup>1</sup>; and a member of the same order withstands with much pertinacity the first preaching of the missionary from Iona in the Scottish Highlands. Almost of equal rank with the Druids, and as vigorously proscribed in Britain by Roman policy was the Ollamh, the "bard," or "gleeman," and only a step lower stood the Seanchaidhe, the "historian," or "story-teller<sup>2</sup>." The person of the former is represented as inviolate; with the princes, and Druids, he takes part in the great national assemblies, he ranks next in precedence to the monarch himself; he has a fixed tithe in the chieftain's territory, besides ample perquisites for himself and his attendants; and by carrying or sending his wand to any person or place, he confers a temporary sanctuary from injury or arrest<sup>3</sup>.

The conqueror of Gaul has also traced the main features of the Celtic religious belief. However modified it may have been by subsequent contact with Roman or

The Celtic Faith.

<sup>1</sup> See Adamnan's *Life of St Columba* by Reeves, p. 74 n. In the Irish MS. of St Paul's Epistles at Wurtzburg the gloss on Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. iii. 8) is *duo Druidæ Ægyptiaci*. In an ancient Hymn ascribed to St Columba (*Miscel. Irish Archæol. Soc. I. 8*) we find the rather curious expression, "Christ the Son of God is my *Druid*." In the Book of Leinster we find Dathi (A.D. 405), the successor of Niall of the Nine Hostages, asking the Druids to ascertain for him by their arts the events that were to happen to him during the ensuing year; and Cormac employs the Druids, like the medicine-men of the North American tribes,

to deprive the men of Munster and their cattle of water. O'Curry's *Lectures on MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History*, p. 271. A decree of one of the Councils of St Patrick directs "Christianus...qui more gentilium ad aruspiciem meaverit, per singula crimina anni pœnitentiam agat." Spelman's *Concilia*, p. 52. See also Patrick's Hymn in Petre's *Tara Hill*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> O'Curry's *Lectures*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> One of the questions discussed at the Council of Drum-ceatt in A.D. 575 was the expulsion of the Bardic Order on account of their inordinate covetousness.

## CHAP. I.

Teutonic systems, it is clear that its original form was Sabæism, and the worship of the powers of nature. Highest in the great Pantheon was the sun, "the life of everything," "the source of all being," who shared the devotion of his votaries with the moon and stars, with genii of the hills and the valley, of the grove and the spring<sup>1</sup>. The "sacred principle of fire" also received special adoration. The season of the vernal equinox was ushered in by the sacred festival of the Baal-tinne, or the day of the Baal Fire, and was celebrated with peculiar rites. The sacred fires which once, from every hill-top in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands welcomed the return of the solar beams, and the banishment of winter's gloom, linger now in the fires of St John's Eve<sup>2</sup>.

The forces of nature, now beneficent and now destructive, have never been worshipped without suggesting the idea of mysterious antagonism, and reproducing more or less the dualism of the East, nor does the Celtic faith seem to have been an exception to the rule. But the rival votaries of the respective principles of fire and water could harmonise their differences by their doctrines, that the material world was doomed to an endless alternation of annihilation and reproduction, according as one or the other of these principles was in the ascendant<sup>3</sup>. The records of Celtic missionary labour in Ireland and Scotland do not make any special mention of those numerous gods whom Cæsar mentions as adored in Gaul, and to whom he has transferred the attributes of the gods of Rome. The names do not occur in these records of Teutates or

<sup>1</sup> For indications of well-worship in the times of St Patrick, see *Vita Trip.* II. 70: "Venit S. Patricius ad fontem in Campo *Finn-Magh* dicto, quem credulum vulgus Regem Aquarum vocabat, et nomen (Hibernicum) ex virtute quam inesse credebat apponendo, *Shan*, i. e. salutiferum, appellabat. Imperitum namque vulgus

credebat in illo fonte, seu verius ipsum fontem *Numen* aliquod esse, et hinc aquarum Regem vocabat, et ut Deum colebat." See also *Vita S. Columbe*, II. ii., and Betham's *Gael and Cymry*, p. 235.

<sup>2</sup> See Petrie's *Round Towers*, p. 37. O'Connor's *Rerum Hibern. Script.* I. xx.

<sup>3</sup> Döllinger's *Church History*, II. 22.

Hæsus, or Ceridwen, or Taranis; but the Apostle of Ireland is represented, in the earliest annals, as recalling his converts from the worship not only of spectres<sup>1</sup> and genii, but of idols also, the greatest of which, the image of Crom-cruach<sup>2</sup>, stood on the plain of Magh Slecht, "the plain of Adoration," and was the chief object of primitive pagan worship till its destruction by St Patrick. As a rule, the original form of the Druidic ritual was of the simplest character. The shadow of the sacred grove, or the wide-spreading oak with its mystic mistletoe, was the Druid's temple; the hill-top, with its crom-lech or altar-stone, his nearest approach to architecture; while the triple procession round the sacred circle from east to west, the search for the sacred mistletoe on the sixth day of the moon, the sacrifice of the milk-white bull, and the usual methods of augury and divination constituted the chief portion of his religious rites. But at particular times, the instinct of expiation, the earnest craving to appease offended powers, or the dread of sudden danger, or the outbreak of the sudden pestilence, induced those inhuman sacrifices which Cæsar has described<sup>3</sup> as existing in his own day, and which long retained their gloomy ascendancy over their votaries.

With this outline of Celtic superstitions we must now pass on. The Celtic races, as we have already remarked, had, except in Ireland and Northern Britain, become amalgamated with the institutions, feelings, and social life of their Roman conquerors, and had learned to ascribe to their deities the attributes of the gods of Greece and Rome. We are therefore hardly concerned with their religious creed, except so far as they formed an advanced outpost amongst the western nations, and when evangelized by Christian

<sup>1</sup> See *Annals of the Four Masters*, I. 155. *Rer. Hibern. Script.* I. xxii.

<sup>2</sup> See O'Curry's *Lectures*, p. 103. *Annals of the Four Masters*, I. 43 n.

<sup>3</sup> *B. G.* vi. 16.

## CHAP. I.

ii. *The Teuton.*

missionaries, became, in their turn, signally ardent and successful preachers of their newly adopted faith.

2. The first wave indeed of immigration had flung the Celt on the European continent, but he soon made way for the Teutonic and Slavic tribes, who next left their homes amidst the Asiatic steppes, and poured down upon the frontiers of the Roman Empire. The Slave came first, but the Teuton quickly followed, and long anticipated him in his contact with the empire, as he was also his superior in moral and social culture.

Under the generic name of Teuton we include, as we have said, not only the inhabitants of that vast region which, bounded by the Baltic on the North, the Rhine on the West, the Vistula and Oder on the East, may be called, with tolerable accuracy, the European home of the Teutonic tribes; nor the Goths only who poured down from the Scandinavian peninsula, and under the name of Ostrogoth and Visigoth, rapidly established themselves in Southern and Eastern Germany; we include also those hardy Northmen, whose gaudy but terrible barks bore them, during the eighth and ninth centuries, from their homes in Denmark and Sweden, to be the scourge and terror of the European shores. Differ as these did, undoubtedly, in minor points—in all the essentials of their moral and religious character they were similar, and for our purposes it will suffice to embrace them under a single head. And this we feel justified in doing. For it may be received as certain that the objects of worship among the Anglo-Saxons were, in the main, identical with those recognised by the wide-spread German race on the continent<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> "While the Scandinavian mythology, even as it has been transmitted to us, may be regarded as a connected whole, the isolated fragments of German mythology can be considered only as the damaged ruins of a structure, for the restoration of which

the plan is wholly wanted. But this plan we in a great measure possess in the Northern Mythology, seeing that many of these German ruins are in perfect accordance with it. Hence we may confidently conclude that the German religion, had it been

To obtain however a clear conception of the Teutonic religious system at this era, is not easy. Tacitus, our authority respecting the earliest German races, "has painted them," to quote the words of Guizot, "as Montaigne and Rousseau the savages, in a fit of ill humour against his country;" and the missionaries of the Middle Ages seldom supply that accurate information regarding the religious faith of the pagan tribes, amongst whom they laboured, which we desire. Selecting then such points as appear to admit of least dispute, we may conclude that a distinction must be drawn between that simpler and purer faith, which the Teuton brought with him from his home in the far distant East<sup>1</sup>, and that which afterwards, owing to settlement in strange lands, intermixture with other races, and such like causes, modified the original form.

The earliest Teutonic doctrine, then, appears to have recognised one Supreme Being, whom it represents as Master of the Universe, whom all things obey<sup>2</sup>. "Who is first and eldest of the gods?" it is asked in the *Edda*, and the answer is, "He is called Allfadir in our tongue<sup>3</sup>."

*Early Teutonic belief.*

handed down to us in equal integrity with the Northern, would, on the whole, have exhibited the same system." Müller, *Altdeutsche Religion*, quoted in Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, I. 228. The principal German writers appear to be divided as to the existence or non-existence of a German mythology distinct from the Scandinavian. Simrock attributes identity of belief and worship to the Scandinavians and Germans. Grimm attempts to construct specifically German mythology. See Perry's *Franks*, p. 21. Kemble's *Saxons in England*, I. 330. Menzell's *Germany*, I. 51.

<sup>1</sup> "A comparison of the several myths, the Northern on the one side, and the Indian, Persian, and other kindred mythologies on the other, suggests many striking resemblances. The Oriental is contemplative, the

Northern is one of pure action; according to the first, the gods are to be reconciled by work of atonement, according to the second, by battle." Thorpe's *Northern Myth*, I. 135.

<sup>2</sup> "Such seems to have been the sublime conception above, if not anterior to, what may be called the mythology of Teutonic religion."—Milman's *Latin Christianity*, I. 258.

<sup>3</sup> The Semnones, a tribe of the Suevi, claimed for their territory the honour of being the original seat of the worship of Allfadir. See Perry's *Franks*, p. 22. Tacit. *Germania*, cap. 39: "Vetustissimos se nobilissimosque Suevorum Semnones memorant. Fides antiquitatis religione confirmatur... Eo omnis superstitio respicit, tanquam inde initia gentis, ibi regnator omnium deus, cetera subjecta atque parentia."

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He lives from "all ages, and rules over his realm, and sways all things great and small. He made heaven and earth, and the lift, that is, the sky, and all that belongs to them, and what is most, he made man, and gave him a soul that shall live and never perish, though the body rot to mould, or burn to ashes<sup>1</sup>." In other places he is spoken of, as the "Author of every thing that exists," the "Eternal," the "Ancient," the "living and awful Being," the "Searcher into concealed things," the "Being that never changes." His is an infinite power, a boundless knowledge, an incorruptible justice. He cannot be confined within the enclosure of walls, or represented by any likeness to the human figure<sup>2</sup>. He has neither sex nor palpable form, and can only be worshipped in the awful silence of the boundless forests, and the consecrated grove. Such appears to have been the primitive faith, more developed subsequently in the Scandinavian *Eddas*, but resting on elemental ideas common to all the Germanic tribes. Allfadir would be a name naturally dear to a people which as yet had hardly passed the limits of the patriarchal state, amongst whom every father of a family was at once a priest and king in his own house<sup>3</sup>. But the idea of pure spirit was too refined to retain a lasting hold on the mind and conscience; it lost its original distinctness, and retired more and more into the back ground, surviving only as the feeble echo of an older and purer revelation. Just as the Aryan<sup>4</sup> in crossing the Hindû Alps, was spell-bound by the new and beauteous world

<sup>1</sup> Dasent's *Norsemen in Iceland*, p. 187. *Oxford Essays*, 1858. Comp. also Milman's *Latin Christianity*, I. 258; Thorpe, I. 229.

<sup>2</sup> "Nec cohibere parietibus deos, neque in ullam oris humani speciem assimilare, ex magnitudine cælestium arbitrantur, lucos ac nemora consecrant, deorumque nominibus ap-

pellant secretum illud quod sola reverentia videt." Tac. *German.* 9.

<sup>3</sup> Taciti *Germania*, 10: "Si publice consulatur, sacerdos civitatis, sin privatim, ipse pater familiæ, precatus deos." Compare Grimm, *D. Myth.* p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Hardwick's *Christ and other Masters*, II. p. 11, 12.



into which he was transplanted, so the Teuton in the course of his migrations towards colder climes, bowed down before "the wild and overbearing powers of nature;" but nature-worship not sufficing, as it never has sufficed, there arose, secondly, an elaborate form of hero-worship, the adoration of the conquerors of nature, that is, of man himself, his virtues, and his vices.

i. First, we say, there was the worship of the elements; from the invisible One emanates, so thought the Teuton, an infinite number of inferior deities, whose temple is every part of the invisible world. Hence the veneration of nature; of nature in all her forms and manifestations; of the heavenly bodies, the sun, the moon, which was regarded as of the male sex, the stars; the earth itself, the Herthus of Tacitus<sup>1</sup>, with its trees and springs, its fountains and hills; the sea, with its storm and calm; the falling snow, and the bristling ice. And since entire nature was but an organ or instrument of Deity, it was of the utmost importance, to pay attention even to the most indifferent phenomena. Nothing was too trifling. The quivering leaf, the crackling flame, the falling thunderbolt, the flight or singing of birds, the neighing of horses<sup>2</sup>, man's dreams and visions, even the movements of his pulse, all needed atten-

i. *Nature-Worship.*

<sup>1</sup> "The Herthus of Tacitus (*Germ.* c. 40) was, doubtless, Hertha the mother Earth, or impersonated nature, of which he describes the worship in language singularly coincident with that of the Berecynthian goddess of Phrygia." Milman's *Lat. Christianity*, i. 260. Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, i. 217. Kemble's *Saxons in England*, i. 337—344. Döllinger, ii. 15. The *insula oceani*, in which Tacitus represents her worship to have its seat, has been identified by some writers with the island of Rügen, and the district of Mecklenburg and Pomerania; by others with Zealand, or Oesel. Latham's *Tac. Germ.* ii. c. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Taciti *Germania*, cap. 10: "Et illud quidem etiam hic notum, avium voces volatusque interrogare: proprium gentis equorum quoque præsagia ac monitus experiri. Publicè aluntur iisdem nemoribus ac lucis candidi et nullo mortali opere contacti; quos pressos sacro curru sacerdos ac rex vel princeps civitatis comitantur hinnitusque ac fremitus observant. Nec ulli auspicio major fides, non solum apud plebem, apud proceres, apud sacerdotes: se enim ministros deorum, illos consocios putant." On similar Slavonic customs see below.

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tion, all might give some sign from the other world. Hence amongst all the Teutonic nations, Gothic, Saxon, Scandinavian, the peculiar regard that was paid to oracles and divinations, to auspices, presages, and lots<sup>1</sup>; hence the functions of the prophetess and the sibyl, the enchanter, the interpreter of dreams, the diviner by offering cups, or the entrails of animals, or human sacrifices, the raisers of storms, the Runic sticks, and all the usual instruments for exploring the secrets either of the past or future. Upsal was the Teutonic Delphi, as famous for its oracles, as for its sacrifices<sup>2</sup>. Here, as in other places, might be found diviners, both male and female, who could supply runes to secure victory in the battle, to preserve from poison, to heal bodily infirmities, to chase away melancholy, or to soften the heart of a cruel mistress. Thus all nature had a voice for the imaginative Teuton, the skies, the woods, the waters, were his books, his oracles, his divinities. Again and again, the records of missionary labour will disclose the worship of the spring and the well, the belief in spirits of the hill and of the lake.

ii. *Hero-Worship.*

ii. But nature-worship does not satisfy. Man ceases to quail before her mighty powers, he learns to defy the wind and storm, the frost and cold, and nature-worship is blended with a complicated system of human gods. The first and eldest of the gods, we saw, was Allfadir, Odin,

<sup>1</sup> The *Indiculus Superstitionum* and the lives of mediæval missionaries afford an insight into the various kinds of Teutonic sorcery. We find *sortilegi*, diviners by lot; *incantatores*, enchanters; *somnium conjectores*, interpreters of dreams; *cochlearii*, diviners by the offering-cup; *haruspices*, consultants of entrails; *immisores tempestatum*, raisers of storms. Thorpe, *N.M.* p. 242. Boniface writing to Cuthbert in 745, informs him that by a decree of a recent Council, "Sta-

tuimus ut singulis annis unusquisque episcopus parochiam suam sollicitè circumceat, populum confirmare, et plebem docere, et investigare, et prohibere paganas observationes, divinos vel sortilegos, auguria, phylacteria, incantationes, vel omnes spurcicias gentilium." *Ep.* lxiii. ed. Migne. Compare also the Appendix to Kemble's *Saxons in England*, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Adami Bremensis Gesta PP. Hammaburg.* Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, T. CXLVI. p. 642.

or Wotan<sup>1</sup>. But this Monotheism quickly fades away. The Great Father is resolved into his attributes, his power is divided amongst a number of inferior divinities, sprung from himself, to each of whom he imparts a portion of his greatness. Hence the twelve Æsir, and the twelve Asyniar. And as in the Hindû mythology Brahm is almost forgotten before Vishnû, or the more terrible Siva and Kali, so Odin shares the worship of his votaries with Thor<sup>2</sup>, the Thunderer, the "chief of the gods in strength and might;" with Týr<sup>3</sup>, the Teutonic Mars, the "bravest of all the gods, the giver of victory, and god of battle;" with Freyr<sup>4</sup>, the god of fertility, of seed-time and harvest,

<sup>1</sup> Woden, Norse *Odinn*, old German *Wuotan* (whence *Wodnes-dæg*, *Odinsdag*, Wednesday); to him the royal families of all the Teutonic races traced their lineage, and he is identified by Tacitus (*Germa.* c. 9), though for what reason is not quite clear, with *Mercury*. "Woden sane, quem adjecta litera Gwodon dixerunt, ipse est, qui apud Romanos Mercurius dicitur, et ab universis gentibus ut deus adoratur." Pauli Diac. i. 9. "Woden, id est, *Fortior*, bella regit hominumque ministrat virtutem contra inimicos." Adami *Bremensis Gesta PP. Hammaburg*, iv. 26. On his worship among the Suevi on the Lake of Constance, see Jonæ *Vita S. Columbani*, ii. 26. Kemble, *Saxons*, i. 343, remarks, "So common in every part of England are names of places compounded with his name, that we must admit his worship to have been current throughout the island."

<sup>2</sup> Thor = Donar, "qui præsidet in aere, qui tonitus et fulmina, ventos imbresque serena et fruges gubernat." Adam *Bremensis, Gesta PP. Hammaburg*, iv. 26. The prevalence of the worship of this deity (after whom comes *Dunres-dæg*, *Thunres-dæg*, dies Jovis) is attested by the Low German formula of renunciation, "Ec forsacho allum diaboles

uuerum and uuordum *thunaer* ende *uuoden* ende *Saxnote* ende allem them umholdum the hira genotas sint." Thorpe, *N. Myth.* i. 230 n.

<sup>3</sup> Týr = *Tiu* (whence *Tiwes-dæg* Tuesday) = *Ziu* = *Mars*, the *Ἄρης* *Ἄρο-τολοιγός*, *μιαφόβος*, of Homer, worshipped chiefly amongst the *Hermunduri*, *Tencteri*, *Suevi*, and *Scandinavians*. See Grimm, *D. M.* 180, 181. Of his worship *Jernandes* says, "Martem semper asperrima placavere cultura; nam victimæ ejus mortes fuere captivorum, opinantes bellorum præsulem aptius humani sanguinis effusione placatum." *Hist. Goth.* cap. v. Kemble (*Saxons*, i. 353) traces the presence of this deity in *Eresburg* in *Saxon Westphalia*, = *Mons Martis*, now *Mersberg*, the hill of *Er*, *Ziu*, or *Mars*.

<sup>4</sup> Freyr = *Fréa* = Old German *Fro*, one of the chief gods of the *Swedes*, the seat of whose worship was at *Upsala*. "Fricco pacem voluptatemque largiens mortalibus cujus etiam simulacrum fingunt cum ingenti priapo." Adam *Brem.* iv. 26. "Si nuptiæ celebrandæ sunt sacrificia offerunt *Fricconi*." iv. 27. Thorpe's *N. Myth.* 27 n. He enjoyed an extensive worship in all parts of Europe. His sacred animal was the *boar*. On the connection of his worship with the needfire so often forbidden by the

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of marriage and fruitfulness; with Baldr<sup>1</sup>, fairest of all his sons, and wisest of the Æsir, "the restorer of peace, the maker up of quarrels;" while Frigga<sup>2</sup>, Odin's wife, presides over the sweet spring-time, and the rising seed, with her attendants Fulla, plenty, Hlin, warmth, and Gna, the sweet and gentle breeze. The Æsir and the Asyniar are the blithe, beneficent powers, but the Teuton could not look out upon the natural world, without tracing in its contradictory phenomena, the operation of other dark and sinister powers, who had brought about a convulsion in high places, and with whose machinations the human race has become entangled. Hence the belief in monstrous fiends and giants, cruel and inexorable. Chief of all these was Loki, whom in language strongly recalling Eastern traditions, the Teuton called the "calumniator and backbiter of the gods," the "grand contriver of deceit and fraud." In his form he is fairer than any of human mould, but his mind is evil; his nature feeble; "he cheateth in all things, and in the arts of perfidy and craft he hath no equal." Once the friend and associate of the Æsir, united with them in sacred brotherhood, he fell like Lucifer, and terrible is his three-fold offspring, the first, Fenris-wolf, the second, Midgard's-worm, the third, a daughter, Hel, the

Loki.

Christian missionaries, and the existence of his worship even in the 13th century, see Kemble, I. 359.

<sup>1</sup> Baldr = Baldæg, the Phœbus Apollo of Scandinavia, with whom Grimm identifies Phol, and of whose worship under the name of *Pol* or *Pol* Kemble discovers some obscure traces in Polebrooke in Northamptonshire, Polesworth in Warwickshire, Polstead in Surrey, and other places. "Baldr's lay," he observes, "may not have been entirely without influence upon the progress of Christianity among the Saxons, if, as is probable, it resembled in its main features the legend of the Scan-

dinavians." *Saxons in England*, I. 367. See also Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, I. 23 n.

<sup>2</sup> See Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, I. 167. Other goddesses mentioned by Bede (*Kerum Nat.* xv.) are *Hrede*, in whom Kemble would trace in some form or other Frigga, Woden's wife, and *Eostre* or *Eastre*, a bright goddess of light and of the newly awakened year. *Saxons*, I. 375. "That she was deeply impressed upon the mind and feelings of the people follows from her name having been retained in the great festival of the Church." See Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, I. 218.

goddess of death. These are the enemies of the Æsir, the authors of disquiet and strife<sup>1</sup>. So long, indeed, as the Æsir had Baldr amongst them, they were safe in Asgard, nor could sin and wickedness prevail on earth. But on a sudden, Baldr the Beautiful began to be haunted with terrible dreams that his life was in peril. In visions and soothsaying it was darkly hinted that some great trouble was in store for the gods from the giant-brood of Loki, who never ceased to work evil among the Æsir. *Baldr.*

In alarm, Frigga, the mother of gods and men, bound with an oath all created nature, that the pride of the Æsir, the darling of the Asyniar, should take no harm of "fire and water, of iron and all kinds of ore, of stones, trees, sicknesses, beasts, birds and serpents." And all created nature took the oath, except one thing only, a sprig of mistletoe, then thought too young to enter into so solemn a compact. And Baldr, believing he was invulnerable, offered himself as a mark for the spears and maces of his fellow-gods. In vain was each shaft aimed against his beauteous form; axe and mace and spear glanced off harmlessly from him whom all nature had sworn to save.

But the malignant crafty Loki bore him ill-will. "So he took on him a woman's likeness," says the *Edda*, "and went to Frigga. And as they talked together, Frigga asked her visitor if she knew what the gods did at their meetings. The woman said she heard they all shot at Baldr, and that he was unscathed." "Yes," says Frigga, "no weapon nor tree may hurt Baldr, I have taken an oath of them all."

<sup>1</sup> "With the entrance of Loki into the Scandinavian mythology, the milder natural religion of the Teutons took a more warlike and savage character, instead of ruling the world in peace, the father of gods and men becomes a god of battles,

Valfadir. To this period too must be ascribed the conception of Odin's preparing his feast in Valhalla." *Dasent's Norsemen in Iceland*, p. 191. Compare Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 90, and *Prose Edda*, p. 446.

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“What! have all things sworn to spare Baldr?” asks the woman. “Well,” replied the goddess, “eastward of Valhalla, grows a tree-twigg, called mistletoe, that we thought too young to crave an oath of<sup>1</sup>.” Thereupon the traitor took the mistletoe, and at the meeting of the gods placed it in the hands of the sightless Hödr, and the shaft pierced Baldr through, so that he fell down dead.

Deep and sore was the affliction of the gods, when the darling of heaven yielded to death. But not without some attempt to ransom him was he to descend to the abode of Hel. Odin himself, on the high-stepping Sleipnir, went down to the infernal palace, if haply he might persuade the awful goddess to restore his son. And from Hel’s palace he returned with the glad tidings that Baldr might be restored to the world above, if all nature that had sworn to preserve him would now lament his death. And all nature wept, and it seemed that he would return, but as the messengers came back from Hel, they came upon an old hag seated in a cave. Her name was Thauck, and when she was asked to weep for Baldr, she exclaimed,

“Thauck will bewail  
With dry tears  
Baldr’s baleful fire.  
Nor quick nor dead gain  
By man’s son,  
Let Hel hold her own.”

So spake the crone, whose form men guess the hateful Loki had assumed, and Baldr’s fate was sealed. Odin could not conquer Death. Around the pile in his good ship Ringhorn, whereupon was laid the fairest of the Æsir side by side with his beautiful Nanna, whom nothing could induce to survive her lord, gathered the gods

<sup>1</sup> *Prose Edda*, Mallet’s *Northern Antiq.* p. 446. Dasent’s *Norsemen in Iceland*, p. 195.

and goddesses, and wept that for Baldr there was no resurrection; that in the dark realm of Hel, in the cold kingdom of the dead, the beauteous god of light must lie for ever<sup>1</sup>.

And yet not for ever, for with the universal protest Future Restoration. against a religion of despair, it was whispered by those that knew the Fates that Baldr would yet arise, not now indeed, but in the after time, when the twilight of the gods was passed. Then after awful prodigies, after the crash of an old and wicked world, in glory and joy shall he return; and over the new earth, purified from sin and sorrow, the god of innocence and purity shall reign, and there the good shall dwell, and happiness enjoy for evermore<sup>2</sup>.

Such, roughly and briefly, were the outlines of the Teutonic creed, and it was suited to the race. As in process of time war followed war, and the Saxon first, and the Northman after him was fain to leave his country, and conquer new kingdoms, his creed would become more warlike. Allfadir would become Valfadir, the "god of war," the "terrible and severe god," the "father of slaughter," who welcomed the warrior in Valhalla. But everywhere and at all times it was a creed to which the Teuton clung, and for which he died, "for it was but the transfiguration of the natural man, with all his virtues and vices, with all his feelings, and passions, and natural affections<sup>3</sup>." And hence, too, the free and easy way in which the Teuton regarded his gods. If he honoured them aright, and offered the due sacrifices, he claimed his reward; but if he considered himself unfairly treated, as

<sup>1</sup> For the beautiful and analogous legend of "Maui the Young," the Prometheus of the Southern Seas, see Hardwick's *Christ and other Masters*, III. 203.

<sup>2</sup> See Kemble's *Saxons in England*,

I. 411. Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, I. 77, 78. Baldr's death was supposed to have been avenged by Odin's son Vali, who slew Hödr.

<sup>3</sup> Dasent's *Burnt Njal*, I. xvii.

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we shall see, once and again<sup>1</sup>, he openly reprov'd them, forsook their worship, and destroyed their temples. For though it may be true that in early times the Teuton had no temples, that the deity whom no inclosure could contain, or mortal form represent, received the adoration of his worshippers in the obscurity of the wood, or on the lonely mountain-top; yet it is certain that with the introduction of an elaborate form of polytheism there gradually grew up a more elaborate form of external worship. The transition from the sacred oak, or the mysterious grove, to the hill altar and the cairn was easy; as easy, the transition thence to the temple of wood, with its nave and shrine, its holy and most holy place<sup>2</sup>. In the Norse temples, formed doubtless on a plan common in earlier times, the images of the gods stood on a platform in the shrine<sup>3</sup>. In front of them was the altar, on which burnt the holy fire. On it, too, was laid the great ring, which, stained with the sacred blood, was placed in the hand of such as were about to take any solemn oath. Hard by, also, was the brazen vessel in which the blood of the slaughtered victims was caught, and the brush or twig wherewith the worshippers were sprinkled. The latter stood opposite the platform of the gods, behind a partition wall, over which, in the outer court, they beheld the ceremonies<sup>4</sup>. The temple of Upsal, the Teutonic Delphi, was in circumference not less than nine hundred ells, and glittering on all sides with gold<sup>5</sup>; in it Odin was re-

*Teutonic  
temples.*

<sup>1</sup> See the speech of Coifi at Godmundingham, and other instances in the account of the Missions in Scandinavia.

<sup>2</sup> *Burnt Njal*, i. xxxvii.

<sup>3</sup> The fact that the temples were of wood, and probably, at least in great part, the idols also, accounts for the fact that we have no single extant example of a Teutonic idol. See *Archæologia*, Vol. xxxv. p. 379.

<sup>4</sup> See Metcalfe's *Oxonian in Iceland*, p. 164.

<sup>5</sup> "In hoc templo [scil. Ubsola] quod totum ex auro paratum est, statuas trium deorum veneratur populus, ita ut potentissimus eorum Thor in medio solium habeat triclinio; hinc et inde locum possident Woden et Frizzo." Adam Brem. iv. 26. Mallet, 109.



presented with a sword in his hand, while on his left stood Thor with the insignia of a crown, a sceptre, and a hammer, and on his right Freyja, an hermaphrodite, with many emblems characteristic of productiveness. Near Eresburg, on the Drimel<sup>1</sup>, stood, till the times of Charlemagne, the celebrated Saxon idol, called the Irmin-Saule. On a high stone column rose the figure of a gigantic warrior, girt with a sword, holding in his right hand a banner, on which was painted a bright red rose, in his left a balance: the crest of the warrior's helmet was a cock, on the breast was figured a bear, on the shield was the representation of a lion in a field full of flowers. The image itself was eleven feet in height, and of a light red colour; its base was of rude stone, surrounded with belts of orichalcum, of which the upper and lower were gilt. It was the largest idol of all Saxony, and pictures of it were suspended in other temples; its priests were in high repute; it could aid the warrior in the din of battle, who oftentimes rode round it and murmured to it his prayers for aid; and sometimes it was borne into the field, and, when the conflict was over, all the prisoners, and all who had disgraced themselves by cowardice were immolated at its foot<sup>2</sup>.

*The Irmin-Saule.*

The offerings presented in these temples consisted of all living things, sheep, oxen, swine, and especially horses. The latter sacrifice was particularly characteristic of the Germanic races<sup>3</sup>. The victims having been slaughtered

*The Sacrifices.*

<sup>1</sup> See Meibomius *de Irminsulâ*. "Imago statuae erat vir terribilis, et gladio accinctus: in galeâ stabat galus loco coni: in thorace expressus ursus; in clypeo leo. Manu dextrâ ferebat vexillum, cum insigni rosæ rubæ; in sinistra lancem æquilibrem, quæ item in clypeo spectabatur." Adam Brem. i. 6. Grimm's *D. M.* 81, 208. Latham's *Tac. Germ.* p. 48. Akerman, in his *Pagan Sazondom*, (p. xxi.) says the Irminsul was wor-

shipped under the joint attributes of Woden, Mars, and Mercury. "The Irminsul, a mysterious symbol, in which might be seen the image of the world or of one's country, or of a god or of a hero." Michelet, i. 79.

<sup>2</sup> See Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, i. p. 224.

<sup>3</sup> See Dasent's *Burnt Njal*, i. xxxix. Metcalfe's *Oronian in Iceland*, p. 164. Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 109.

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before the images of the gods, the heads were by preference offered to them, and with the hides were fixed or hung on trees in the sacred groves<sup>1</sup>. The blood was caught in the blood-bowl and sprinkled with the blood-twig on the altar, the images, and the people, while the fat was used for anointing the images, which were then rubbed dry. The flesh was boiled down in caldrons, over fires placed along the whole length of the nave. Round these the worshippers took their seats, and ate the flesh, and partook of the broth, while the chief, to whom the temple belonged, blessed the cups of mead or beer in honour of Odin, Freyr, Thor, Freyja, and last, of departed friends. Then the rest in order took the cup, and each made his vow or offered his prayer, and so the feast went on, terminating too often in riot and drunkenness. Such were the usual sacrifices. But human victims were also offered on great occasions, particularly slaves, criminals, and captives<sup>2</sup>. This custom was common to all the Germanic races, and answered to our public executions. But at Upsal, the ninth month of each year, and every ninth year appear to have been specially set apart for these mournful ceremonies<sup>3</sup>; and on such occasions the presence

*Human victims.*

Snorro, I. 327. The horseflesh branded by the Christian missionaries was the flesh of the sacred horses offered before the heathen altars, at the great feasts in honour of the gods.

<sup>1</sup> Thorpe's *Northern Antiq.* I. 265. The discovery of bones, but especially the teeth of ruminants, in our pagan Saxon burial grounds may be accounted for by the practice (forbidden by Christian missionaries, see *Ep. Bonif.* LXXI.) of placing the heads of animals slain in sacrifice on poles or stakes near the graves of the dead. "Thus exposed to the effect of wind and weather, the teeth would become detached and strewn upon the ground, and as successive interments

took place, would be mingled with the earth which filled the graves." Akerman's *Pagan Saxondom*, p. xvii. *Archæologia*, XXXV. p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Bartholini *Antiq. Danicæ*, 388—396. Thorpe's *N. Myth.* I. 264. Latham's *Taciti Germ.* p. 49. Milman, I. 260. There is distinct evidence of the practice of human sacrifice among the Goths, Frisians, Heruli, Thuringians, Swedes, and Danes.

<sup>3</sup> "Reges et populi, omnes et singuli sua dona transmittunt ad Ubsolam... Ex omni animante, quod masculinum est, novem capita offeruntur, quorum sanguine deos placare mos est. Corpora autem suspenduntur in luco, qui proximus est templo... Ibi canes et equi pendent cum homi-

of the king, together with that of all citizens of importance, was deemed absolutely essential. Human victims appear to have served often as sacrifices of atonement, being offered either to the malign deities, or as propitiatory sacrifices to the dead in the nether world<sup>1</sup>. In seasons of more than ordinary calamity, the king himself might be required to lay down his life. Thus, on occasion of a great dearth, the first king of Vermaland, in Sweden, was burnt in honour of Odin; the jarl Hakon offered up his son to procure the victory in the great sea-fight with the Jomsburg pirates; and Aun, another king of Sweden, immolated, at the shrine of Odin, nine of his sons, in order that his own life might be prolonged<sup>2</sup>.

3. But it is now time to glance at that third group of <sup>iii.</sup> *The Slave*. nations, the Slavonic, which, as we have remarked, has an especial interest for us, inasmuch as the conversion of these races was to the Church of Constantinople, what the conversion of the Teutonic family was to the Church of Rome. Though they became known to Western Europe and the Byzantine writers only in the sixth century, they were not unknown to the Greek father of history. He has told us of the Callipidæ and Alazones, and other Scythic tribes which have been identified with the Slavonians, and Pliny and Tacitus have mentioned them under the names of Venedi, Serbi, and Stavani. Without pausing, however, to investigate their origin and parentage, we may observe that gradually they became known to Western

nibus, quorum corpora mixtim suspensa narravit mihi aliquis Christianorum 72 vidisse." *Adami Bremen-sis Gesta PP. Hammaburg*, iv. 26.

<sup>1</sup> Dithmar, bishop of Merseburg, writing in the 11th century, says, "There is in Zealand a place which is the capital of Denmark, named Lederun (= Lethra). At this place, every nine years, in the month of January, the Danes flock together

in crowds, and offer to their gods ninety-nine men, as many horses, dogs, and cocks, with the certain hope of appeasing the gods by these victims." Mallet, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Tac. *Germ.* c. 39. "Deorum maxime Mercurium colunt, cui certis diebus humanis quoque hostiis litare fas habent." Yngling, *Sag.* 29. Mallet's *Northern Antiquities*, p. 112.

## CHAP. I.

*Early Slavonic  
settlements.*

Europe after the Teutonic races had settled down in the Southern and Western provinces of the Roman Empire. They established themselves as a peaceful nomad race on the lands which previous immigrations left unoccupied, till at length they gave their name to that part of Europe which extends from the Elbe to the Don, and from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea. On a map of Europe in the beginning of the sixth century, they are represented forming three principal branches or aggregates of tribes<sup>1</sup>. Towards the East, resting on the Euxine, and extending from the Dniester to the Dnieper and the Don, are the Antes, the progenitors of the great Russian people. The Western branch consisting of the Venedi, or Wends, rests upon the Baltic, and in process of time builds along its shores Lubeck, and Julin, and other seaport towns. Between the two intervene the Slavenes, a nomad race, blending sometimes with the Eastern, sometimes with the Western branch. At a later period their settlements embraced on the North of the Carpathian mountains Pomerania and Brandenburg, Saxony and Silesia, Bohemia and Moravia, Poland and Russia; while on the South of the same range, they settled in Moldavia and Wallachia, and gradually formed the kingdoms of Slavonia and Bosnia, Servia and Dalmatia, throwing offshoots even into Illyria and Carinthia<sup>2</sup>. Their first coming, we have said, was peaceful. They occupied quietly such lands as their Teutonic brethren left them, and thence pushed forward, Eastward, and Southward, and Westward, building trading cities like Kioff and Novgorod and Arcona in Rugen, sinking mines in Germany, smelting and casting metals, preparing salt and planting fruit-trees, leading a quiet and contented life. Early writers uniformly speak of them in favourable

<sup>1</sup> For their distribution in the times of Adam of Bremen, see his *Hist. Eccles.* II. 18. See also Döl-

linger, III. 22. Gibbon, v. 167 n.

<sup>2</sup> See Krasinski's *Lectures on Slavonia*, p. 4.

terms. Procopius describes them as free from malice and fraud, generous and hospitable. Adam of Bremen<sup>1</sup> extols their kindness and hospitality, and we shall find the biographer of an eminent missionary Bishop not only praising the same virtues in the Slavonians of Pomerania, but stating that their objections to Christianity were based on the rapacity and immorality of its professors<sup>2</sup>. But they became at an early period the victims of unparalleled oppressions, and the consequences were discernible in their national character<sup>3</sup>. Under the iron heel of the Germans on the North, the Turks on the South, and afterwards the Mongols on the East, their veracity and good faith were exchanged for duplicity and cunning. As they were first seen by Western Europe, they displayed all the simple and well-known characteristics of the pastoral tribe. Living in huts of rough timber in the depth of forests, or along the banks of rivers, tending their numerous flocks of sheep and cattle, or sowing the millet which they ate mingled with mares' milk, defending themselves in time of war almost naked with nothing but a shield for a weapon of defence, and for offence, a bow

*Slavonic characteristics.*

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Eccles.* II. 12. "Omnes adhuc paganis ritibus oberrant, ceterum moribus et hospitalitate nulla gens honestior aut benignior poterit inveniri." See also Helmold, *Chron. Slavorum*, cap. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita Ottonis*, II. 40, Pertz, XII. 800. Boniface, writing to Ethelbald (*Ep.* LXII. ed. Migne) in the year 745, says, "Winedi, quod est fedissimum et deterrimum genus hominum, tam magno zelo matrimonii amorem mutuum servat, ut mulier, viro proprio mortuo, vivere recuset, et landabilis mulier inter illas esse judicatur, quæ propria manu sibi mortem intulit, ut in una stræ pariter ardeat cum viro suo." Speaking of the Pomeranians the biographer of Otho says, "Tanta vero est fides et societas inter eos, ut furtorum et fraudum penitus inex-

perti, cistas aut scrinia seratas non habeant. Nam seram vel clavem ibi non vidimus, sed ipsi admodum mirati sunt, quod clitellas nostras et scrinia serata viderunt. Vestes suas, pecuniam et omnia preciosa sua in cuppis et solis suis simpliciter copertis recondunt, fraudem nullam metuentes, utpote inexperti." John de Plano Carpini mentions exactly the same thing of the Tartars, Hakluyt's *Voyages*, I. 55.

<sup>3</sup> "The wild but plaintive spirit of the hereditary bondman yet lives in his national music, as it breaks upon the ear, in the low, melancholy wail of the wind-instruments from the bands of Croat and Slavonian regiments on the Glacis of Vienna." Sheppard's *Nationalities*, p. 147.

## CHAP. I.

and a quiver of poisonous arrows<sup>1</sup>, or the lasso, they presented a ready object for oppression, and seemed to court it by their pastoral simplicity and inexperience. And centuries of oppression did their usual work. They became demoralized and debased; submissive in adversity, they were tyrants in their hour of power, and obtained notoriety for cruelties practised only amongst the most savage nations.

*The Slavonic  
faith.*

Their religious system was of a much simpler character than that of the Teuton. "The Slavonians," says Procopius, "worship one god, the maker of the thunder, whom they hold to be the only Lord of the universe, and to whom they offer cattle and different kinds of victims. They do not believe in fate, or that it has any power over mortals. Whenever they are in danger of death, either from illness or from the enemy, they make vows to God to offer sacrifices if they should be saved. When the peril is over, they fulfil their vows, and believe that it was this which saved them. They also worship rivers, nymphs, and some other deities, to whom they offer sacrifices, making divinations at the same time<sup>2</sup>." This description is applicable generally to the Slavonic tribes we shall notice in our record of missionary zeal. The "Lord of Thunder" appears under the name of Peroun at Kioff and Novgorod, and in Moravia his idol was of wood, with a head of silver. Triple and many-headed divinities, as Triglav and Radegast<sup>3</sup> the god of war, were peculiar to this group of nations, and as their system was dualistic, they had not only their good, but evil powers, their white and

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, v. 170, ed. Smith.

<sup>2</sup> Procopius *de bello Gothico*, III. Krasinski, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> "Medii et potentissimi omnium (Slavorum) sunt Retharii, civitas eorum vulgatissima Rethre (juxta villam *Prilwitz* prope *Neu-Strelitz*) sedes idolatriæ. Templum ibi mag-

num constructum est demonibus, quorum princeps est Redigas. Simulacrum ejus auro, lectus ostro paratus." Adam Brem. II. 18. Thietmar, *Chronicon*, VI. 17. Herbordi, *Vita S. Ottonis*, II. 29. Saxo Grammaticus, *Hist. Danicæ*, cap. xiv.

black divinities, Belbog and Zernabog<sup>1</sup>. The most famous idol, at least of the Baltic Slavonians, was Sviantovit, or Swantevits. His fane was at Arcona, the capital of the island of Rugen, and was not destroyed till the year 1168. A Danish historian<sup>2</sup>, who may have been present at its destruction, informs us that the temple which was of wood, beautifully constructed, rose from a level spot in the middle of the town<sup>3</sup>. It had two enclosures. The outer consisted of a wall with a roof painted red; the interior was hung with tapestry, and ornamented with paintings. The idol which stood in the sanctuary was of a gigantic size, with four heads, as many necks, two chests, and two backs, one turned to the right and another to the left. In his right hand he held a horn, made of various metals, which was once a year filled with mead by the attendant priest. His left arm was bent on his side in the form of a bow. He was arrayed in a long flowing robe reaching down to the feet. Around him were placed his bridle, and sword of a very large size with its beautiful silver hilt and scabbard. The worship of the idol was defrayed by an annual tax, payable by every inhabitant of the island, by a third of the spoils taken in war, and the numerous votive offerings sent to the temple by Slavonic and neighbouring chiefs. A regiment of three hundred chosen cavalry was especially dedicated to Sviantovit;

*Temple at  
Arcona.*

*Image of  
Sviantovit.*

<sup>1</sup> See Döllinger, III. 22. Blumhardt, *Etabl. du Christianisme*, IV. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, *Historie Danice*, Lib. XIV. At Rugen were also the images of Porenut, the god of the seasons, with four faces and a fifth on his breast, also of Rhugevit, the god of war, with seven faces, and seven swords suspended at his side, and an eighth in his hand.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 320. Similarly in the life of Otto, bishop of Bamberg, we find the Slavonic temples at Stettin thus described: "Erant in civitate Steti-

nensi cortinæ quatuor, sed una ex his, quæ principalis erat, mirabili cultu et artificio constructa fuit, interius et exterius sculpturas habens, de parietibus prominentes imagines hominum et volucrum et bestiarum, tam proprie suis habitudinibus expressas, ut spirare putares ac vivere; quodque rarum dixerim, colorum imaginum extrinsecarum nulla tempestate nivium vel imbrium fuscari vel dilui poterant, id agente industria pictorum." Herborði *Vita Ottonis*, II. 31, Pertz, XII. 794.

in his name they went forth to fight, and brought back the booty which the priest made up into different kinds of ornaments for the temple<sup>1</sup>. The god himself was believed to accompany his worshippers to the battle-field on a white horse which specially belonged to him. It was a sin to pull a hair from his tail or mane, and the priest alone might feed or mount him: he also knew when he had been forth to battle, for in the morning he was found from time to time in his stable reeking with sweat and covered with mud<sup>2</sup>. This horse was especially consulted on going forth to war, for it could reveal the secrets of the future. When the tribe wished to declare war three rows of spears were laid down before the temple. Solemn prayers were then offered up, and the horse was led forth by the priest. If in passing over these spears he lifted his right foot first, then the war would be prosperous; if the left, or both together, it was a fatal omen, and the

<sup>1</sup> See for a like description of the votive offerings in the Slavonic temple of Stettin, *Ottonis Vita*, II. 31: "Crateres etiam aureos vel argenteos quibus augurari epulari et potare nobiles solebant ac potentes, in diebus solempnitatum quasi de sanctuario proferendos ibi collocaverunt. Cornua etiam grandia tauro-rum agrestium decorata et gemmis intexta, potibus apta, et cornua cantibus apta, mucrones et cultros, multanque supellectilem pretiosam, raram et visu pulchram, in ornatum et honorem deorum suorum ibi conservabant."

<sup>2</sup> *Historie Danice*, Lib. XIV. The description of the sacred horse in the temple of Stettin, which, however, was black instead of white, is given in very similar terms in *Ottonis Vita*, II. 32: "Habebant caballum miræ magnitudinis et pinguem, nigri coloris et acrem valde. Iste toto anni tempore vacabat, tantæque fuit sanctitatis, ut nullum dignaretur sessorum, habuitque unum de quatuor

sacerdotibus templorum custodem diligentissimum. Quando ergo itinere terrestri contra hostes aut prædatum ire cogitabant, eventum rei hoc modo per illum solebant prædiscere: Hastæ 9 disponebantur humo, spatio unius cubiti ab invicem disjunctæ. Strato ergo cāballo atque frenato, sacerdos, ad quem illius pertinebat custodia, tantum freno per jacentes hastas in transversum ducebat ter atque reducebat. Quod si pedibus inoffensis hastisque indisturbatis, equus transibat, signum habuere prosperitatis, et securi pergebant; sin autem minus, quiescebant." See also Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Lib. VI., who describes the same form of augury as existing among the Lenticians: "Equus, qui maximus inter alios habetur, et ut sacer ab iis veneratur, super fixas in terram duorum hastilium inter se transmissorum cuspides, supplicii obsequio ducunt et præmissis sortibus, quibus id prius exploravere, per hunc quasi divinum, denuo augurantur."



expedition was given up. The most solemn festival was after harvest. On this occasion the people of Rugen assembled, offered sacrifices of cattle, and held a solemn feast. The priest, conspicuous for his long hair and beard, prepared for the ceremony by sweeping carefully the most holy place into which he alone might enter. In doing so he was obliged to hold his breath lest the divine presence should be defiled, and if he wished to respire he was obliged to go out into the open air<sup>1</sup>. On the morning of the festival he brought forth to the assembled people the sacred mead-cup taken from the idol's hand. If the mead had decreased therein, he announced the fact to the multitude, and bade them beware of scarcity; if it had increased, it was an omen of abundance. The old liquor was then poured forth as a libation at the foot of the idol, and the priest refilling it, engaged in solemn supplication for the people, praying for prosperity and victory in war. He then emptied the horn at a single draught, and refilling it, placed it in the right hand of the idol, where it remained till the next year. Round cakes of flour and honey were then offered, and the priest concluded the ceremony by blessing the people in the name of the god, exhorting them to frequent sacrifice, and promising them, as their reward, victory by sea and land. The rest of the day was spent in feasting on the remains of the offerings, and the people were taught that, on this occasion, intemperance was a virtue, sobriety a sin<sup>2</sup>.

*Slavonic  
Ritual.*

Such is the account given by a contemporary writer of

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Danicæ*, Lib. XIV. : "Observato ne intra ædem halitum funderet. Quo quoties capessendo vel emittendo opus habebat, toties ad januam procurrebat, ne videlicet dei præsentia mortalis spiritus contagio pollueretur." The only genuine monuments of Slavonian idolatry which have come down to us were discover-

ed at Prillwitz, on the banks of the lake Tollenz, in Mecklenburg, the supposed site of Rethra; they were dug up about the end of the 17th century. Krasinski, p. 16, n.

<sup>2</sup> "In quo epulo sobrietatem violare pium æstimatum est, servare nefas habitum." *Hist. Danicæ*, XIV.

## CHAP. I.

*Slavonic animism.*

this celebrated Slavonic idol; and it gives us a very vivid idea of Slavonic worship as it was observed as late even as the middle of the twelfth century<sup>1</sup>. The characteristics of Slavonic heathenism are plain. It was marked, on the one hand, by the worship of the gladdening, fructifying powers of nature, and, on the other, by the deprecation of dark and sinister powers, who manifest their malignant arts by creating discord, sickness, and death. The first were symbolized by Lada, the goddess of love and pleasure, Kupala, the god of the fruits of the earth, Koleda, the god of festivals, who delighted in offerings of the fruits of the earth and in songs and dances round lighted fires<sup>2</sup>. Of the others, the chief was Zernabog, the Black Deity, whose name recalls the Matchi Manito of the Mexicans, and who, like the latter, was approached with fear and horror, and propitiated with human sacrifices and darker rites. The belief in fairies and sprites, in water-nymphs and wood-nymphs, in sorcery and magic, was as active amongst the Slavonians as amongst their Teutonic brethren, while the respect paid by them to their priests, who united civil and religious functions, was as submissive as that of the Celt to his Druid teacher.

With this sketch of the religious systems of the three great groups of nations now presented to the energies of the Christian Church, we pass on to describe the lives and labours of those who now appeared to communicate to them the Word of Life.

<sup>1</sup> The Slavonic population of the countries on the Baltic, Prussia, Courland, Livonia, Esthland, and Lithuania, and the mixed Lettic and Slavonic population of Prussia, continued pagan till the 13th century. "The Lettic tribes added a god in the form of a bird; they had their sacred trees and groves, offered human sacrifices, and were, like the Finlanders, skilled in the arts of ma-

gic and sorcery." Döllinger, III. 278.

<sup>2</sup> *Historie Danice*, Lib. XIV. As in other countries, so in Poland and Russia, on the eve of St John the Baptist (June 23) youths dance round lighted fires in honour of *St John Kupala*; the festival of *Koleda* is repeated in that of Christmas, and Christmas is even called *Koleda* in some parts of the same countries. See Krasinski, p. 15. Ranke's *Servia*, Introd.

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY EFFORTS OF THE CHURCH AMONGST THE NEW RACES.

A. D. 340—508.

Καὶ οὔτε αἱ ἐν Γερμανίαις ἰδρυμέναι ἐκκλησίαι ἄλλως πεπιστεύκασιν ἢ ἄλλως  
παραδιδόσων, οὔτε ἐν ταῖς Ἰβηρίαις, οὔτε ἐν Κελτοῖς.—IRENÆUS.

WHEN we proceed to enquire in what way a knowledge of Christianity was diffused among the nations which thus established themselves on the ruins of the Roman Empire, we find, at least at the outset, that ecclesiastical history can give us but scanty information. “We know as little in detail,” remarks Schlegel, “of the circumstances under which Christianity became so universally spread in a short space of time among all the Gothic nations, as of the establishment, step by step, of their great kingdom on the Black Sea<sup>1</sup>.” The rapid and universal diffusion, indeed, of the new faith, is a proof of their capacity for civilization, and of the national connection of the whole race; but where shall we find the details of their conversion? We have not a record<sup>2</sup>, not even a legend, of the way in which the Visigoths in France, the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, the Suevians in Spain, the Gepidæ, the Vandals, the followers

CHAP. II.

*Scanty records of  
the propagation  
of the Gospel  
among the Gothic  
nations.*

<sup>1</sup> F. Schlegel's *Lectures on Modern History*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Milman's *Latin Christianity*, I. 269. Smith's *Gibbon*, IV. 324. Döllinger, II. 72. On the early traces

of Christianity in Germany, see Fabricii, *Salut. Lux Evangelii*, pp. 417—419. Wiltch's *Geography of the Church*, I. 109. Eng. Transl.

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A. D. 325.

of Odoacer, and the fiery Lombards, were converted to the Christian faith. We may trace this, in part, to the terrible desolation which at this period reigned everywhere, while nation warred against nation, and tribe against tribe; we may trace it, still more, to the fact that every one of the tribes above mentioned was converted to the Arian form of Christianity, a sufficient reason in the eyes of Catholic historians for ignoring altogether the efforts of heretics to spread the knowledge of the faith. And till the close of the sixth and the opening of the seventh century, we must be content with the slenderest details, if we wish to know anything of the early diffusion of Christianity on the European continent.

*Missionary  
efforts of  
Theophilus.*

The record, however, of one early missionary has "forced its way into the Catholic histories." In the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus, the Goths descending from the North and East, began from their new settlements on the Danube to threaten the safety of the southern provinces of the Empire. Establishing themselves in the Ukraine and on the shores of the Bosphorus, they spread terror throughout Pontus, Bithynia, and Cappadocia. In one of these inroads, they carried off from the latter country a multitude of captives, some belonging to the clergy, and located them in their settlements along the northern bank of the Danube. Here the captives did not forget their Christian duties towards their heathen masters, nor did the latter scorn to receive from them the gentle doctrines of Christianity. The work, indeed, went on in silence, but from time to time, we have proofs that the seed had not been sown in vain. Among the 318 bishops at the Council of Nice, the light complexion of the Gothic bishop Theophilus must have attracted notice, as contrasted "with the dark hair and tawny hue of almost all the rest<sup>1</sup>." But Theophilus was the predecessor and teacher of a still

<sup>1</sup> Stanley's *Lectures on the Eastern Church*, p. 110, 2nd Edition.

greater missionary. Among the involuntary slaves carried off in the reign of Gallienus were the parents or ancestors of Ulphilas, who has won for himself the title of "Apostle of the Goths." Born, probably, in the year 318, he was, at a comparatively early age, sent on a mission to Constantinople, and there Constantine caused him to be consecrated bishop by his own chaplain, Eusebius of Nicomedia<sup>1</sup>. From this time he devoted himself heart and soul to the conversion of his countrymen, and the Goths were the first of the barbarians, among whom we see Christianity advancing general civilization, as well as teaching a purer faith<sup>2</sup>.

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A.D. 325.

But his lot was cast in troublous times: the threatened irruption of a barbarous horde, and the animosity of the heathen Goths, induced him to cross the Danube, where the Emperor Constantine assigned to his flock a district of country; and here he continued to labour with success. The influence he had already gained, and the natural sense of gratitude for the benefits he had bestowed upon the tribes by procuring for them a more peaceful settlement, rendered his efforts comparatively easy<sup>3</sup>. Rejoicing in the woodlands and pastures of their new home, where they could to advantage tend their numerous flocks and herds, and purchase corn and wine of the richer provinces around them, they listened obediently to the voice of their bishop, whom they likened to a second Moses. And the conduct of Ulphilas justified their confidence. With singular wisdom he did not confine his efforts to the oral instruction of his people; he sought to restore to them the art of writing, which probably had been lost, during their migration from the east to the north of Germany. Composing an alphabet of twenty-five letters, some of

A.D. 348-374.  
*Labours  
amongst the  
Goths.*

<sup>1</sup> See *The Life of Ulphilas* by one of his pupils, bishop Auxentius, published by Waitz of Kiel, 1840.

<sup>2</sup> See Müller's *Lectures on the Science of Language*, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> Smith's *Gibbon*, IV. 324.

CHAP. II.  
A.D. 340—374.

which he was fain to invent, in order to give expression to sounds unknown to Greek and Latin pronunciation<sup>1</sup>, he translated the Scriptures into the native language of his flock, omitting only the four books of Kings<sup>2</sup>, a precaution he adopted, from a fear that their contents might tend to rouse the martial ardour, and fierce spirit of a people, who, in this matter, to use the quaint language of the historian, “required the bit rather than the spur.”

After a while, he was constrained to act the part of mediator between the Visigothic nation and the Roman Emperor Valens. In the year A.D. 374 the barbarous horde of the Huns burst upon the kingdom of the Ostrogoths, and having subdued it, turned their eyes to the lands and possessions of the Visigoths. Unable to defend the line of the Dniester, the latter fell back upon the Pruth, hoping for safety amidst the inaccessible defiles of the Carpathian mountains. But sensible that even here they were not secure, a considerable party began to long for an asylum within the Roman dominions, and it was agreed that ambassadors, with Ulphilas amongst their number, should repair to the court of Valens, and endeavour to obtain a new settlement.

A.D. 376.  
*Ulphilas at the  
Court of Valens.*

Valens was an Arian and a controversialist. At this very time he was enforcing at Antioch, “by other weapons

<sup>1</sup> “Ulphilas,” remarks Müller, “must have been a man of extraordinary power to conceive, for the first time, the idea of translating the Bible into the vulgar language of his people. At his time, there existed in Europe but two languages which a Christian bishop would have thought himself justified in employing, Greek and Latin. All other languages were still considered as barbarous. It required a prophetic sight, and a faith in the destinies of those half-savage tribes, and a conviction also of the utter effectlessness of the Roman and

Byzantine empires, before a bishop could have brought himself to translate the Bible into the Vulgar dialect of his barbarous countrymen.” *Lectures*, p. 175. Gibbon, IV. 323, ed. Smith.

<sup>2</sup> “For the Old Testament he used the Septuagint; for the New, the Greek text; but not exactly in that form in which we have it.” Müller’s *Lectures*, p. 174. Gieseler, II. 79. On the celebrated Codex Argenteus see Davidson’s *Biblical Criticism*, p. 676. Wetstein, *Prolegom.* I. 114.

than those of reason and eloquence," a belief in the Arian theology; and when the poor bishop presented himself and requested aid in the dire necessity of his people, the emperor is reported to have persecuted him with discussions on the hypostatic union, and to have pressed upon him the necessity of repudiating the confession of Nice, and adopting that of Rimini. Ulphilas was in a great strait, but being a simple-minded man, and considering the question one of words, and involving only metaphysical subtleties, not worthy of consideration in comparison with the sufferings of his people, he assented to the emperor's proposal, and promised that the Gothic nation should adopt the Arian confession. The emperor, on his part, consented to give up certain lands in Mœsia, but annexed to this concession two harsh and rigorous conditions; that before they crossed the Danube, the Goths should give up their arms, and suffer their children to be taken from them as hostages for their own fidelity, with the prospect of being educated in the different provinces of Asia<sup>1</sup>.

On these hard terms, instructions were issued to the military governors of the Thracian diocese, bidding them make preparations for the reception of the new settlers. But it was found no easy matter to transport across a river more than a mile in breadth, and swelled by incessant rains, upwards of a million of both sexes and of all ages. For days and nights they passed and repassed in boats and canoes, and before they landed, not a few had been carried away and drowned by the violence of the current. But besides the disciples of Ulphilas, thousands of Goths crossed the river who still continued faithful to their own heathen priests and priestesses. Disguising, it is even said, their priests in the garb of Christian bishops and fictitious ascetics, they deceived

CHAP. II.  
A.D. 376—388.

*Goths coming  
to Mœsia.*

<sup>1</sup> Smith's Gibbon, III. 320. Döllinger, II. 16.

CHAP. II.

A.D. 376-388.

the credulous Romans, and only when on the Roman side of the river did they throw off the mask, and make it clear that Valens was not easily to have his wish gratified, and see them converted to Arianism. One of the hereditary chiefs, Fritigern, a disciple of Ulphilas, adopted the creed of the empire, the other, Athanaric, headed the numerous party which still continued devoted to the altars and rites of Woden. The latter faction placing their chief god on a lofty waggon, dragged it through the Gothic camp; all who refused to bow down, they burned with their wives and children; nor did they spare the rude Church they had erected, or the confused crowd of women and children who had fled to it for protection. But while the great bulk of the Gothic nation were involved in constant wars with the Roman armies, and under the two great divisions of Ostrogoths and Visigoths were gradually spreading themselves over Gaul, Italy, and Spain, Ulphilas continued, till the year 388, to superintend the temporal and spiritual necessities of the peaceful and populous colony of shepherds and herdsmen, which, as in another Goshen, he had formed on the slopes of Mount Hæmus, and to whom he had presented the Gothic Bible in their own tongue<sup>1</sup>.

S. Chrysostom.

The zeal he had displayed found an imitator in the great Chrysostom<sup>2</sup>. What was the measure of his success we have no means of judging, but it is certain that he founded in Constantinople an institution in which Goths might be trained and qualified to preach the Gospel to their fellow-countrymen<sup>3</sup>. Even during the three years of his

A.D. 404.

<sup>1</sup> "The translation of Ulphilas was used by all the Gothic tribes when they advanced into Spain and Italy."—Müller's *Lectures*, p. 174.

<sup>2</sup> See Guericke's *Manual of Eccl. Antiq.* p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Ὁμογλώττους γὰρ ἐκείνους πρεσ-

βυτέρους, καὶ διακόνους, καὶ τοὺς τὰ θεῖα ὑπαναγινώσκοντας λόγια προβαλλόμενος μίαν τούτοις ἀνένειμεν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ διὰ τούτων πολλοὺς τῶν πλανωμένων ἐθήρευσεν.—Theodoret, *H. E.* v. 30.



banishment to the remote and wretched little town of Cucusus, among the ridges of Mount Taurus, amidst the want of provisions, frequent sicknesses without the possibility of obtaining medicines<sup>1</sup>, and the ravages of Isaurian robbers, his active mind invigorated by misfortunes found relief not only in corresponding with Churches in all quarters, but in directing missionary operations in Phœnicia, Persia, and amongst the Goths<sup>2</sup>. In several extant epistles we find him advising the dispatch of missionaries, one to this point, another to that, consoling some under persecution, animating all by the example of the great Apostle St Paul, and the hope of an eternal reward. And in answer to his appeals, his friends at a distance supplied him with funds so ample, that he was enabled to support missions and redeem captives, and even had to beg of them that their abundant liberality might be directed into other channels. How far his exertions prevailed to win over any portion of the Gothic nation to the Catholic communion, we have no means of judging. Certain it is that from the Western Goths, the Arian form of Christianity extended to the Eastern Goths, to the Gepidæ, the Alans, the Vandals, and the Suevi<sup>3</sup>; and, it has been justly remarked that we ought not to forget "that when Augustine, in his great work on the 'city of God,' celebrates the charity and clemency of Alaric during the sack of Rome, these Christian graces were entirely due to the teaching of Oriental missionaries, heretics though they were<sup>4</sup>."

<sup>1</sup> S. Chrysost. *Op.* XII. *Ep.* xiv.

<sup>2</sup> *Opera*, Vol. XII. pp. 729, 747, 748, 749, 750, 799. Gibbon, IV. 157. Wiltch's *Church Geog.* I. 187.

<sup>3</sup> "Sic quoque Visigothi a Valente Imperatore Ariani potius quam Christiani effecti. De cætero tam Ostrogothis, quam Gepidis parentibus suis per affectionis gratiam evan-

gelizantes, hujus perfidiæ culturam edocentes omnem ubique linguæ hujus nationem ad culturam hujus sectæ incitavere." Jornand. c. xxv. Gieseler, II. 80. Döllinger, II. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Stanley's *Eastern Church*, p. 291, 2nd Edition. See Aug. *de Civitate Dei*, Lib. III. chap. 29: "Galli quidem trucidaverunt senatum, quid-

## CHAP. II.

*orig. Auck-  
riles.*

But even during the present period of disorder, while the different nations were moving forward, to take up their position on the ruins of the Roman Empire, instances are not wanting, of men who were willing to leave their homes, to evangelize the heathen, or reclaim the Arianised tribes. Scanty, indeed, are the records of their labours which have come down to us, but as drops betokening the coming shower, as the "cloud no bigger than a man's hand," which told of "abundance of rain," their preparatory efforts must not be passed by. Of a few of these, we will first speak, before we recount the circumstances that led to the baptism of Clovis, and the conversion of the Franks, events pregnant with the most important issues to the ecclesiastical history of Europe, and, not least, to the subsequent encouragement and protection of missionary labour.

*S. Valentinus.  
A.D. 440.*

One of the first of these early labourers, Valentinus<sup>1</sup>, appeared in the year 440, in the neighbourhood of the modern Passau, then called *Castra Batava*, a town or rather fort in *Vindelicia*, at the junction of the Inn and the Danube. Eagerly desirous to preach to the pagan inhabitants, but reminded of the words of the Apostle Paul, "How shall they preach, unless they be sent," he is said to have betaken himself to Rome, and sought from Pope Leo authority to commence his labours. Successful in his petition, he returned to Passau, and commenced his work, but his efforts were ineffectual owing to the opposition of the Arians, and the tenacity with which the heathen adhered to their superstitions. Again, therefore, he repaired to Rome, and begged that he might be sent to some other

*quid ejus in urbe...reperire potuerunt  
...Gothi vero tam multis senatoribus  
pepercerunt, ut magis mirum sit  
quod aliquos peremerunt."*

<sup>1</sup> In Surius, *Acta SS.* Aug. 4, we have a life of this missionary based on an ancient record of his

labours said to have been found, about the year 1120, beside his body under the church of Passau. It is described as written "*tabulâ plumbeâ, et ut vix posset intelligi...tum vetustate, tum terræ putrefactione dissipatâ...*"

quarter of the mission-field, where he might behold some reward for his toil. Leo received him kindly, and urged him to make a final effort, empowering him if again unsuccessful, to seek some other sphere of labour, and ordaining him a regionary Bishop. For the third time he now repaired to Passau, to find himself still unable to make any impression. The Arians, with whom he would hold no communication whatever, and not even eat or drink<sup>1</sup>, represented his interference with cruelty, and he was forced to retire to the highlands of the Rætian Alps. Here he built himself a cell amidst the passes of the Tyrol, and lived the life of a solitary. His austerities speedily attracted the notice of the surrounding population, his retreat became the resort of numbers, who flocked to hear the word of life from his lips, and to receive baptism at his hands. With the assistance of a few others whom he had persuaded to adopt an ascetic life, he constructed a Church, and devoted himself to prayer and contemplation, to reading and almsgiving; and while he was reaping the harvest denied him among the people of Passau, that neighbourhood was visited by one, whose self-denying labours have won for him the title of the "Apostle of Noricum<sup>2</sup>."

CHAP. II.  
A.D. 440.

A curious mystery veils alike the birth-place, and the early years of Severinus. None could tell whence he came, when, soon after the death of Attila, he made his appearance in the country now known as Bavaria and Austria. From his speech it might have been inferred that he was a Latin or a North African, but from his own lips nothing more could be learnt, than that in a distant province of the East, he had once encountered great danger, from which the Providence of God had delivered him. But he never revealed the particulars of his early life, and men scarcely

A.D. 454-482.  
*S. Severinus.*

<sup>1</sup> "Versutias hæreticorum toto studio declinabat, ita ut nec audire eos, nec in cibo, potu, aut qualibet amicitie conjunctione cum eis com-

municare vellet." *Vita S. Valentini.*

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Severini, Acta SS. Bolland. Jan. 8.*

dared to ask him. On one occasion, when every one else hung back, a certain presbyter, by name Pirmenius<sup>1</sup>, had the courage to put the question, and to him the saint replied in a playful strain, "What! do you take me for some runaway slave? Provide then a ransom which you may pay for me, if I am inquired for." And then he continued in a more serious tone, "What advantage can it be for a servant of God to specify his country or his descent, when, by keeping silence, he can so much better avoid all boasting? Notwithstanding be assured that the same God who ordained that thou shouldest be a priest, bade me come to the assistance of the suffering people of this country." On another occasion, however, he went so far as to hint, that from a wish for close communion with God and the unseen world, he had fled in early life to an Eastern desert: but in his retreat, he perpetually seemed to hear voices, which bade him show forth his love to Christ in a more practical way, and labour for the welfare of the heathen tribes on the distant Danube.

*His missionary  
efforts in Pan-  
nonia.*

He had come, therefore, to the province of Pannonia, and found the country a scene of the wildest confusion. Law and order had fled; tribe after tribe crowding upon one another, passed through the land wasting and destroying; the people afflicted by alternate war and famine, saw themselves stripped of their possessions, and sold into slavery. In spite of scenes like these the good man did not despair; he would comfort the hearts of the afflicted people; he would live amongst them a life of absolute self-denial; he would spend and be spent in their behalf; and by his own example he would teach them how they might bear their trials. Accordingly he took up his abode in the neighbourhood of Vienna, and here and near Passau

<sup>1</sup> "Pirmenius quidam, presbyter Italie, nobilis et totius auctoritatis." *Vita S. Severini*, Cap. 4. Ne-

ander's *Memorials of Christian Life*, p. 333. Döllinger, II. 74.

he built for himself a cell, and shortly afterwards a monastery, where he trained a few faithful followers to become preachers in Pannonia and Noricum.

CHAP. II.  
A.D. 454—482.

Nothing daunted his heroic courage. Though a native of the East, he contrived to inure himself to every hardship, so that in time he could travel barefoot in the midst of winter<sup>1</sup> over frozen rivers, in order to collect from the different tribes food and clothing for the naked and the hungry, or means whereby to ransom those who had been sold into slavery. Though merciful to others he never spared himself, but consented to submit to the greatest hardships, if he could thereby minister to the wants of his flock. His fame spread far and wide; his cell was visited by multitudes who regarded him as a prophet and a teacher from a higher world. His advice was asked and acted upon, without question or doubting. On one occasion, his exhortation to Christian charity sank so deep into the hearts of his hearers, that they made their way in the depth of winter, over mountains, and through trackless forests, amid snow and ice, to bring clothes and food to their poorer brethren. On another occasion, he received from some merchants a quantity of olive oil, then very scarce and precious. Assembling his people in Church, and returning thanks to God, he there distributed to each a due proportion, counselling some, at the same time, to fly to the fortified towns for protection, and exhorting all to thank God for His great mercies, and amid the constant and devastating wars which had driven them from their homes, to put their full trust and confidence in Him, and to believe that He was doing all things well. His love was comprehensive. In barbarians, whether orthodox or Arian, he recognised brethren needing aid, and

*His heroic  
courage.*

<sup>1</sup> "Calceamento nullo penitus indutus, ita mediâ hyeme, quæ in illis regionibus sæviore gelu torpescit, nu-

dis pedibus semper ambulare contentus, singulare patientiæ dabat exemplum."—Eugippii *Vita*, cap. 2.

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A.D. 454-482.

drove none away. The Arian chief of the Rugii<sup>1</sup> sought his advice; in the spirit of the Apostle of the Gentiles he received him, "but not unto doubtful disputations," and gave him good counsel in his necessities. All were won by the attractive power of his love, by the sincerity and devotion of his life. The sick in their afflictions, the penitent in their remorse, rough soldiers in times of danger, sought his counsel; some he healed, others he advised, all he comforted.

*His influence  
over barbarous  
chiefs.*

Such was his influence, that barbarian chiefs consented, at his instance, to spare beleaguered towns, to restore captives, and to refrain from cruelty. Even the garrisons of Roman fortresses implored his presence among them, believing that thus they were protected from harm. On one occasion, the king of the fierce Alemanni approached the town of Passau, threatening to besiege it. In their alarm, the inhabitants sought the aid of Severinus, whose cell was close by the confluence of the Inn and the Danube. He went forth to meet the king, with whom he was not altogether unacquainted. The reverence of the latter for the man of God was so great, that he not only did not dare to attack the town, but abstained from laying waste the neighbouring territory, and restored the captives he had taken. The courage, moreover, that Severinus exemplified himself, he could inspire in others. The city of Vienna was once besieged by a barbarian horde, who carried off the flocks and herds of the inhabitants, and wasted their lands to the very walls. "Hast thou no soldiers to pursue these marauders?" said Severinus to the commander of the garrison. "With my small force

<sup>1</sup> "Rugiorum rex...habens Gothos ex inferiore Pannoniâ vehementer infensos...beatissimum Severinum in suis periculis consulebat. Tunc ergo a viro Dei hoc responsum predictus accepit: si nos una Catholica fides

annecteret, magis me de vitæ perpetuitate debuisti consulere; sed quia tantum de præsentî salute sollicitus, quæ nobis est communis, interrogas, instruendus ausculta."—Eugippii Vita, c. 2.

I dare not venture," replied the other, "to attack such a multitude; but if thou biddest me go, I will go, trusting to conquer, not by force of arms, but by thy prayers." "Go forth," said the holy man, "and put thy trust in God. Take weapons from the foe, and arm thy troops with them. The merciful God goes before thee, and the weak shall become strong; but slay not thy captives, bring them all to me unharmed." The commander went and conquered; the captives were brought to Severinus, who caused them to be refreshed with meat and drink, and then sent them back to their countrymen with a warning not to venture there again for the sake of plunder, as they would assuredly not escape the wrath of God who fought for his people.

No wonder that by a grateful and admiring people such a man was regarded as a prophet and a worker of miracles. Yet he himself did not seek notoriety: sometimes he enjoined silence, always he bade his hearers ascribe the praise to God, "who doth wonders in heaven and on earth, quickening the lost to salvation, and calling back the dead to life." No wonder also that the rough soldier chiefs attracted by the heroism of his life invoked his aid in times of danger, or when undertaking a new enterprise. Thus Odoacer, who had led a wandering life among the barbarians of Noricum, having made up his mind to the desperate adventure of seeking a kingdom in Italy, solicited the approbation and blessing of the saint. The lowness of his cell would not admit the lofty stature of the chief, but Odoacer stooped, and received the encouragement he desired<sup>1</sup>. "Proceed," he was told, "to Italy;

His Humility.

<sup>1</sup> "Odoacer ... vilissimo tunc habitu, juvenis statura procerus advenerat. Qui dum se, ne humile tectum cellulæ suo vertice contingeret, inclinasset, a viro Dei gloriosum se fore cognovit. Cui etiam valedicenti,

'Vade,' inquit, 'ad Italiam, vade, vilissimis nunc pellibus coopertus, sed multis cito plurima largiturus.'"—*Vita S. Severini*, cap. 2. Gibbon, iv. 299.

CHAP. II. though clothed now with a coarse garment of skins thou wilt soon cast it away, and bestow wealth on many.”  
 A.D. 454—482.

In behalf of his people, Severinus never failed to stand up and protest against oppression or cruelty threatened them by any of the barbaric chiefs. On one occasion, he heard that Gisa, queen of the Rugii, had taken some Roman captives, and had condemned them to cruel slave labour. The man of God interposed and petitioned earnestly for their release. This the queen stoutly refused, and bade him keep to his cell and his prayers, and leave her to treat her slaves as she pleased. “I trust in my Lord Jesus Christ,” replied the other, “that what she will not do willingly, she may be compelled to do even against her will.” His prayer was before long fulfilled. In a narrow cell some goldsmiths were condemned to labour beyond their strength in fashioning royal ornaments. Hither one day the queen’s little child ran in sport; the prisoners seized it, and swore if they were not released they would first kill the child and then themselves. The queen in this dilemma relented, gave the prisoners their freedom, sent a messenger with all speed to Severinus to acknowledge her fault and implore his pardon, and at the same time sent back the Roman captives.

*His Death.*

At length the man of God lay on his deathbed. For thirty years he had continued to labour amongst his people, to bear the burden of their sorrows, and to animate them to sustain their numerous trials; declining the honour of the episcopate, he had preferred to go on as he had begun, and now his work was ended. But even on his deathbed he did not cease to reprove and exhort the barbarian chiefs. Sending for the king and queen of the Rugii, he reasoned with them long and earnestly of “righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come.” At last stretching forth his hand, and pointing to the king’s heart,



“Gisa,” he asked, “which, tell me, lovest thou most, this soul, or gold and silver?” And when she replied that she loved her husband more than all the treasures of the world, “Beware,” he continued, “of oppressing the innocent, lest their affliction bring your power to destruction; oftentimes you stand in the way of the king’s clemency, and therefore I on the brink of the eternal world implore you for the last time to desist from all such evil deeds, and adorn your life with good works.” The king and queen retired, and shortly afterwards the man of God embraced his brethren who had continued steadfast amidst all his dangers, and bade them farewell; he received the holy sacrament, and when they for sorrow could not sing the psalm that he desired, he began himself to sing, and with the words “let everything that hath breath praise the Lord” upon his lips, he expired on New Year’s Day, A.D. 482.

A.D. 482.

Such are a few of the many instances recorded by his biographer of the way in which this eminent missionary ministered to the wants, spiritual and bodily, of the tribes near the Danube, amidst the ravages and desolation of this period. Nor were the impressions made by his sojourn lost on the different chiefs. Many a deed of mercy and unexpected kindness was owing to his intrepid expostulations, and those of other solitaries who, braving the dangers and difficulties incident to such a calling, settled down with true missionary zeal amongst the wild and lawless tribes, and awed them into obedience by the austere holiness of their lives.

But fourteen years after the death of Severinus, the chief of a tribe<sup>1</sup>, which had settled along the Eastern bank of the Rhine, from its mouth to its junction with the Maine, espoused the Catholic Faith, and his conversion and that of

*Conversion of the Franks.*

<sup>1</sup> On conversion of the Burgundians, see Socrates, *Ecl. Hist.* vii. 30.

Ozanam, *Civilisation chez les Francs*, p. 51.

CHAP. II.

A.D. 481.

his subjects demands our attention, not only as illustrating many of the secondary agencies which extended Christianity among the different nations at this period, but as exerting in its remote and its immediate consequences no little influence on the ultimate civilization of Europe.

A.D. 486.

In the year 481, Clovis or Chlodwig succeeded to the chieftaincy of the Salian Franks. He was only fifteen years of age, and the extent of his territory and the number of his subjects were extremely small, but the unusual daring and energy of his character speedily shewed that he was destined to effect great results. He had no sooner reached the verge of manhood than he entered on that career of conquest which eventually laid at his feet a wider kingdom than that of modern France. His first campaign brought him face to face with Syagrius, annihilated the shadow of the old Roman dominion, gave him possession of Soissons, Rheims, and other Roman towns, and extended his borders to the Loire, the limit of the Visigoths. Ten years of comparative repose elapsed before his next victory over the Alemanni in a great battle near Zülrich, and in the meantime he had married Clotilda, the daughter of Chilperic, king of Burgundy.

A.D. 493.

*Clovis and  
Clotilda.*

The family history of this princess illustrates the turbulence of the times, and proves how little as yet Christianity had allayed the ferocity of the barbarians. She had seen her father, mother, and two brothers all murdered by her uncle Gundebald, who, as though this was not enough, besieged his own brother in his castle, and burnt him alive. Though brought up in an Arian court, she had, through what influence is unknown, been educated in the Catholic faith. On her marriage with Clovis, she was permitted to conform to her own religion, and it naturally became her earnest desire to see her husband lay aside his idols, and adore with her the same God. But Clovis

was little disposed to yield to her suggestions, and remained profoundly indifferent to her entreaties. In time she gave birth to a child, and with Teutonic indifference the Salian chief permitted it to be baptized. The ceremony was performed with no little pomp, the Church, where she worshipped, was hung with curtains and tapestry, and the queen hoped that the spectacle of the splendour with which the sacred rite was performed might effect what her own arguments had proved unequal to accomplish<sup>1</sup>. But the child died, and this event served only to prejudice her lord still more, who saw in it the manifest resentment of his gods. Another child, however, was soon after born, and with the same strange indifference he allowed the dangerous experiment to be repeated. The child was brought to the font, and when it began to sicken, the king prophesied that it too was doomed to die. The honour of her God amongst the heathen was now at stake, and the queen prayed earnestly that the child's life might be spared, and her prayer was heard. Gregory of Tours tells us, that this made a profound impression on the warrior's mind. But it was not by these gentle influences that the omnipotence of the Christian's God was established to his satisfaction. In vain the queen recounted to him the miracles wrought at the tomb of St Martin at Tours, how the blind received their sight, and the dumb spake, and the deaf heard, and the lame walked; how perjurers were constrained to confess their sins, or were struck down by divine judgments; how dust from the saint's grave, or fragments of the wax tapers that burnt before his shrine, or of the curtains that concealed it, were possessed of resistless efficacy.

The warrior listened with the same careless indifference.

<sup>1</sup> "Adornari ecclesiam præcipit (sc. regina) velis atque corticulis, quo facilius vel hoc mysterio provocare-

tur ad credendum, qui flecti prædicatione non poterat."—Greg. Turon. II. 29.

## CHAP. II.

A.D. 496.

*The Battle of  
Tolbiac.*

These were not the "evidences" to have much weight with him. At length, on the battle-field of Tolbiac, his incredulity came to an end. The fierce and dreadful Alemanni, fresh from their native forests, had burst upon the kingdom of his Ripnarian allies; Clovis with his Franks had rushed to the rescue, and the two fiercest nations of Germany were to decide between them the supremacy of Gaul. The battle was long and bloody, the Franks after an obstinate struggle wavered, and seemed on the point of flying, and in vain Clovis implored the aid of his own deities. At length he bethought him of the vaunted omnipotence of Clotilda's God, and he vowed that if victorious he would abjure his pagan creed, and be baptized as a Christian. Thereupon the tide of battle turned; the last king of the Alemanni fell, and his troops fled in disorder, purchasing safety by submission to the Frankish chief. On his return Clovis recounted to his queen the story of the fight, the success of his prayer, and the vow he had made. Overwhelmed with joy, she sent without delay for Remigius, the venerable bishop of Rheims, and on his arrival, the victorious chief listened attentively to his arguments. Still he hesitated, and said he would consult his warriors. These rough soldiers evinced no unwillingness; with, perhaps, the same indifference that he himself had permitted the baptism of his children, they declared themselves nothing loth to accept the creed of their chief<sup>1</sup>.

*Baptism of  
Clovis.*

Clovis therefore yielded, and the baptism was fixed to take place at the approaching festival of Christmas. The greatest pains were taken to lend as much solemnity as possible to the scene<sup>2</sup>. The Church was hung with embroidered tapestry, and white curtains, and blazed with a

<sup>1</sup> "Omnis populus pariter acclamavit, "Mortales deos abjicimus, pie rex, et Deum, quem Remigius prædicat, sequi parati sumus."—Greg. Turon. II. 31. But see Perry's *Franks*,

p. 80, n.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the account of the baptism of Constantine given in Stanley's *Eastern Church*, p. 216.

thousand lights, while odours of incense, "like airs of paradise," in the words of the excited chronicler, "filled the place." The new Constantine, as he entered, was struck with awe. "Is this the heaven thou didst promise me?" said he to the bishop. "Not heaven itself, but the beginning of the way thither," replied the bishop. The service proceeded. As he knelt before the font to wash away the leprosy of his heathenism, "Sicambrian," said Remigius, "gently bow thy neck, burn that thou didst adore, adore that which thou didst burn<sup>1</sup>." Thus together with three thousand of his followers, Clovis espoused Clotilda's creed, and became the single sovereign of the west, who adhered to the confession of Nicæa. Everywhere else Arianism was triumphant. The Ostrogoth Theodoric in Italy, the successors of Euric in Visigothic France, the king of Burgundy, the Suevian princes in Spain, the Vandal in Africa, all were Arians.

The conversion of Clovis, like that of Constantine, is open to much discussion. It certainly had no effect upon his moral character. The same "untutored savage" he was, the same he remained. But the services he rendered to Catholicism were great, and they were appreciated. "God daily prostrated his enemies before him, because he walked before Him with an upright heart, and did what was pleasing in His eyes." In these words Gregory of Tours expresses the feelings of the Gallic clergy, who rallied round Clovis to a man, and excused all faults in one who could wield the sword so strenuously in behalf of the orthodox faith<sup>2</sup>. His subsequent career was a succession of triumphs: Gundebald the Burgundian king felt the vengeance of Clotilda's lord on the bloody field

<sup>1</sup> The words are variously given. In the *Historiens de la France*, T. III. p. 9, we have, "Mitissicamber: depone colla, idola varia crema, cultum venerare divinum." In Hincmar's

*Vita Remigii* the words are, "Mitissicamber: adora quod incendisti, incende quod adorasti."

<sup>2</sup> Perry's *Franks*, p. 77. Sir J. Stephen's *Lectures*, 1. p. 60.

## CHAP. II.

A.D. 507.

*Victories of  
Clovis.*

of Dijon on the Ousche, and the cities on the Saone and the Rhone were added to the Frankish kingdom. A few more years, and the Visigothic kingdom in the South felt the same iron hand. The orthodox prelates did not disguise the fact that this was a religious war, and that the supremacy of the Arian or Catholic Creed in Western Europe was now to be decided<sup>1</sup>. Clovis himself entered fully into the spirit of the crusade; on approaching Tours he made death the penalty of injuring the territory of the holy St Martin; in the church of the saint he publicly performed his devotions, and listened to the voices of the priests as they chaunted the 18th Psalm, *Thou hast girded me, O Lord, with strength unto the battle; thou hast subdued unto me those which rose up against me. Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me*<sup>2</sup>. Whether he understood the words or not, they seemed prophetic of the subsequent career of the new champion of Catholicism. The orthodox historians exhaust the treasury of legends to adorn his progress. A "hind of wonderful magnitude"<sup>3</sup> guided him through the swollen waters of the river Vienne; a pillar of fire blazed forth from the cathedral as he drew nigh Poitiers, to assure him of success. At last, the bloody plains of Vouglé witnessed the utter defeat of the Arian Goths, and Alaric their king was mingled with the crowd of fugitives. Bordeaux, Auvergne, Rouergne, Toulouse, Angoulême, successively fell into the hands of the Frankish king, and then before the shrine of St Martin the "eldest son of the Church" was invested with the titles of Roman Patricius and Consul, conferred by the Greek Emperor Anastasius<sup>4</sup>.

We have thus sketched the rise of the Frankish monarchy because it has an important connection with the

<sup>1</sup> Hallam's *Middle Ages*, I. 3.<sup>2</sup> Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol.

I. 279.

<sup>3</sup> Michelet's *History of France*, I. 51.

Greg. Turon. II. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Perry's *Franks*, p. 88. Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Supplemental Notes, p. 7.

history of Christian missions. Orthodoxy advanced side by side with the Frankish domination. The rude warriors of Clovis, once beyond the local boundaries of their ancestral faith, found themselves in the presence of a Church which was the only stable institution in the country, and bowed before a creed, which, while it offered infinitely more to the soul and intellect than their own superstitions, presented everything that could excite the fancy or captivate the sense. Willingly, therefore, did they follow the example of their king, and for one that embraced the faith from genuine, a thousand adopted it from lower motives. And while they had their reward, the Frankish bishops had theirs too, in constant gifts of land for the foundation of churches and monasteries, and in a speedy admission to wealth and power.

But the Frankish Church was not destined to evangelize the rude nations of Europe. The internal dissensions, and constant wars of the successors of Clovis, were not favourable to the development of Christian civilization at home, or its propagation abroad. Avitus of Vienne, Cæsarius of Arles, and Faustus of Riez proved what might be done by energy and self-devotion<sup>1</sup>. But the rapid accession of wealth more and more tempted the Frankish bishops and abbots to live as mere laymen, and so the clergy degenerated, and the light of the Frankish Church grew dim. Not only were the masses of heathendom lying outside her territory neglected, but within it she saw her own members tainted with the old leaven of heathenism, and relapsing, in some instances, into the old idolatries<sup>2</sup>. A new influence, therefore, was required, if the light of the Frankish Church was to be rekindled, and the Germanic tribes evangelized. And this new influence was at hand. But to trace its origin, we must leave the scenes

*Degeneracy of the  
Frankish Church.*

<sup>1</sup> Neander, v. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Perry's *Franks*, p. 488.

of the labours of Ulphilas and Severinus, for two sister isles high up in the Northern Sea almost forgotten amidst the desolating contest, which was breaking up the Roman world. We must glance first at the origin of the Celtic Church in Ireland and the Scottish highlands, whose humble oratories of timber and rude domes of rough stone<sup>1</sup> might, indeed, contrast unfavourably with the prouder structures of the West, but whose missionary zeal burnt with a far steadier flame. We must, then, turn to the shores of Kent, where the story of Clovis and Clotilda was to be re-enacted, and a Teutonic Church was destined to arise, and send forth, in its turn, missionary heroes amongst their kindred on the continent, not more zealous, perhaps, or more loving, but more practical and more judicious than their Celtic forerunners.

<sup>1</sup> Petrie's *Round Towers*, I. 158—193, and Mr Mure's *Characteristics of Old Church Architecture in the*

*Mainland and Western Islands of Scotland*, p. 184.



## CHAPTER III.

### THE CHURCH OF IRELAND, AND THE MISSION OF ST PATRICK.

A.D. 431—490.

Sed Deus vicit in me et restitit illis omnibus, ut ego venirem ad Hibernas gentes evangelium prædicare.—S. PATRICK *Confess.*

It is not our intention to enter upon the vexed and difficult question how far Christianity had spread in Ireland during the first four centuries of our era. Without pressing the boast of Tertullian that parts of the British islands never visited by the Romans had received the faith; or the authorities collected by Archbishop Ussher<sup>1</sup>, which would make us believe that the introduction of Christianity into the island was due to the labours of Apostles, we may accept it as certain that at a very early period Christian communities were established here, and that their introduction originated in the commercial relations which we know from Tacitus<sup>2</sup> obtained in the earliest times between Ireland and the continent of Gaul. CHAP. III.

Whatever uncertainty, however, hangs over the dawn of Irish Christianity, begins to disappear about the middle of the fifth century. From the Chronicles of Prosper we learn that in the year A.D. 431, the attention of Pope Celestine was drawn to the wants of this distant island, and *Mission of Palladius.*  
A.D. 431.

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian, *Lib. adv. Judæos*, c. vii. Euseb. *Dem. Evang.* iii. 7. Niceph. *Hist. Lib.* iii. i. Ussher's *Brit. Eccl. Antiq.* c. xvi. Works, vi.

286. Lanigan's *Eccl. Hist. of Ireland*, i. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita Agricola*, c. 24

that he dispatched hither a bishop named Palladius. But the words of the chronicler do not explain the precise object of his mission. "To the Scots believing in Christ," he writes, "Palladius ordained by Pope Celestine is sent as the first bishop<sup>1</sup>." These words are ambiguous, and have excited considerable discussion, on which we need not enter. Whether the purpose of the coming of Palladius was to preside over already existing Churches, or to check, as some have supposed, the inroads of the Pelagian heresy, it appears certain that he landed with twelve companions on the confines of Wicklow, and after some opposition, owing to the hostility of one of the Irish princes, succeeded in baptizing a few converts, and erecting three wooden churches<sup>2</sup>. But his stay was of no long duration; from some unexplained cause his work did not prosper, and he retired to Scotland with the intention of proceeding to Rome, but died some little time after at Fordun in Kincardineshire<sup>3</sup>.

*St Patrick.*

But within a year he was followed by another missionary, who was destined to produce very different results. The form of the great "Apostle of Ireland" is almost lost in a halo of extravagant and miraculous legends. By some<sup>4</sup>, in consequence, his very existence has been doubted; and to extract the truth from the mass of fable with which his life and labours have been well-nigh buried, is a work of considerable difficulty. In the following sketch we shall

<sup>1</sup> "Ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatus a Papa Celestino Palladius primus Episcopus mittitur." Prosper. *Chron.* A.D. 431. Bede, *H. E.* i. 13. Jaffe's *Regesta Pont. Rom.* p. 52. Innes' *Civil and Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, i. 52.

<sup>2</sup> "Nathi, son of Garchu, refused to admit him; but, however, he baptized a few persons in Ireland, and three wooden churches were erected by him, [namely] Cell-Fhine, Teach-na-Romhan, and Domnach-

Arta. At Cell-Fhine he left his books, and a shrine with the relics of Paul and Peter, and many martyrs besides. He left these four in these churches: Augustinus, Benedictus, Silvester, and Solinus." *Annals of the Four Masters*, i. 129.

<sup>3</sup> Nennius, *Hist. Brit.*, Gale, *Script.* xv. p. 94. Lanigan, i. 39. Innes, p. 65. Hussey n. in Bede, i. 13.

<sup>4</sup> See Schell. *de Ecclesiasticæ Britonum Scotorumque Historiæ fontibus*, pp. 61—69.

confine ourselves as much as possible to the information derivable from authentic sources, the short treatise of St Patrick, entitled his *Confession*, his letter to Coroticus, and the canons of one or two councils assembled by him, and shall make but little use of the lives of the saint drawn up in an age of credulity by Probus and Jocelin<sup>1</sup>.

The true name of the "Apostle of Ireland" was "Succath." He was born of Christian parents; his father Calphurnius was a deacon, his grandfather Potitus a priest<sup>2</sup>; though an ecclesiastic, Calphurnius appears to have held also the rank of Decurion<sup>3</sup>, and may, therefore, have been of a Roman or provincial British extraction. The birthplace of the saint is uncertain, and has been hotly disputed. *Bonaven Tabernie* is the locality mentioned by himself in his *Confession*, as the residence of his parents<sup>4</sup>. By Lanigan and Döllinger the place thus indicated has been identified with Boulogne in Normandy<sup>5</sup>, while Archbishop Ussher, Ware, Innes, and other eminent authorities<sup>6</sup> place it in Scotland, and identify it with the present Kirkpatrick, between the castle of Dumbarton and the city of Glasgow. The weight of evidence seems to favour the latter conclusion, and of the various years, which have been assigned for his birth, the balance of authorities seems to point to A.D. 387 as the most probable<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> "Among the various monuments of his (St Patrick's) history," says Father Innes, "nothing appears to me a more proper voucher and more assured foundation to go upon, than the short writing called his *Confession*, which is generally esteemed his own work, is quoted by the ancientest authors of his life, and contains an account of him as an apostolical man, incomparably more answerable to that character than any one of his lives or all of them put together." *Civil and Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, p. 35. See also Gallandii *Prolegomena de S. Patricio*, and Gieseler, II. 81 n.

<sup>2</sup> "Patrem habui Calpornium diaconum, filium quondam Potiti presbyteri." *S. Patricii Confessio*, O'Connor's *Proleg. ad Hibern. Script.* I. cvii.

<sup>3</sup> "Ingenuus fui secundum carnem, decurione patre nascor." *Ep. ad Coroticum*.

<sup>4</sup> "Fuit in vico Bonaven Tabernie, Villulam Enon prope habuit, ubi capturam dedi." *S. Patricii Confes.*

<sup>5</sup> Lanigan, I. c. 3. Döllinger, II. 21. King's *Primer*, I. 16.

<sup>6</sup> Ussher, *Works*, Vol. VI. 375. Ware, *Script. Hibern.* p. 101. Innes, p. 34.

<sup>7</sup> The intricate question is fully discussed in Lanigan, I. ch. 4.

CHAP. III.

A.D. 387?

His parents, as we have said above, were Christians, and from his Confession it would appear that the Gospel had been published and received to some extent in the neighbourhood of his father's home. Whatever amount, however, of instruction he may have received was rudely interrupted when he was sixteen years of age. The coasts of Scotland were at this time peculiarly exposed to the predatory excursions of Irish chieftains, who landed in their swift barks, ravaged the country, and having carried off as many as they could of the inhabitants, consigned them to slavery. In one of these expeditions the house of Calphurnius was attacked, and the future missionary with two of his sisters, and many hundreds of his countrymen, was carried away from his home, and conveyed to the North of Ireland. Here he was purchased as a slave by a chief named Milcho, who inhabited that part of Dalaradia<sup>1</sup>, which corresponds to the present county of Antrim. The work assigned him was that of tending his master's flocks and herds, and in his Confession he has drawn an affecting picture of the hardships to which at this period he was exposed. As he wandered over the bleak mountains he was often drenched with rains, often numbed with the frosts. And being thus thrown back upon himself, he could find alleviation only in frequent prayer and meditation. The good seed sown in early years now sprang up, and the religious emotions he afterwards so eminently displayed began to stir within him. His period of servitude lasted six years, and during this time he would seem to have made himself acquainted with the language of the native tribes, and to have learnt their habits and modes of

<sup>1</sup> On Dalaradia consult Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, p. 339, and the note there from the *Four Masters*. In the latter annals we read, "A.D. 388 Milchu, son of Hua Buain, king of North Dalaradia." "This

was the master," says Reeves, "under whom St Patrick served; he is called in the Tripartite Life 'Milcho Buani filius Princeps Dalaradiæ.'" *Tr. Th.* p. 119.

*His captivity.*  
A.D. 403?

life. At length either through the operation of an old law<sup>1</sup> which gave freedom to domestic slaves in the seventh year, or, according to his own account, in consequence of a dream warning him to prepare for his return, he succeeded in effecting his escape to the seaside; there he took ship and after a tempestuous passage regained his father's house. His stay, however, was but brief. In a second predatory excursion he again was taken captive, and again after a short interval made his escape.

Had he listened to his parents he would now have settled down amongst them: but other ideas had filled his mind, and he heard voices bidding him "leave his own country and his father's house." "The divine response," he writes, "frequently admonished me to consider whence I derived this wisdom which was not in me, who neither knew the number of my days nor was acquainted with God; whence I obtained afterwards so great and salutary a gift as to know or to love God." During the weary hours, moreover, of his captivity he had often reflected how blessed it would be, if he, to whom it had been given to know the true God and His Son Jesus Christ, could carry the Glad Tidings he himself had heard in early years, to his master's people and the land of his exile. And now by dreams and visions the old desire was awakened afresh. "One night," to borrow his own words, "he had a dream, in which he thought he saw a man coming from Ireland, whose name was Victoricius, with a great number of letters. One of these he gave him to read, and in the beginning occurred the words, "the Voice of the Irish." While he was reading this letter, he thought he heard the voice of the people who lived hard by the wood of Foch-ladh, that is, of Hy-Amalgaidh now Tirawley, crying to him with one voice across the Western Sea, "We intreat thee, holy youth, to come and walk among us."

CHAP. III.

A.D. 410?

*Meditates the  
conversion of  
Ireland.*

<sup>1</sup> Lanigan, i. chap. 4, note 43. Todd's Irish Nennius, 202 n.

## CHAP. III.

A.D. 418?

*His travels.*

Obedient, therefore, to what he deemed a voice from heaven, and resisting the arguments and entreaties of his relatives and friends, who seem to have regarded his enthusiasm with little favour, he set out for the monasteries of Southern Gaul, there to prepare himself for the great work of preaching the Gospel in the land of his captivity. Amidst the conflicting legends which now follow him at every step, it seems certain that he repaired to the monastery of St Martin bishop of Tours, and submitted himself for some time to the strict discipline of that famous seminary<sup>1</sup>; that afterwards he studied with Germanus at Auxerre<sup>2</sup>, and thence betook himself to one of the "islands of the Tuscan Sea," probably Lerins<sup>3</sup>, where Hilary of Arles, and Lupus of Troyes had been educated. Returning thence to Auxerre, it is not improbable that he was actively employed for some little time in pastoral duties, having been successively ordained deacon and priest during his sojourn amongst the Gallic monasteries.

A.D. 429.

There is a tradition that in the year 429 he visited Britain in company with Germanus and Lupus, and assisted them in eradicating the Pelagian heresy<sup>4</sup>, and on his return, he is represented by some writers as having been sent by Germanus to Celestine, together with Segetius, a priest, who bore letters recommending him to the Pope. That the attention of the Pope had been directed to the wants of the Irish Church is manifest from the mission of Palladius in 431. But the fact that he consecrated St Patrick bishop for the work of evangelizing the Irish is not to be met with in any lives, as Lanigan admits, except Jocelin's and the Tripartite<sup>5</sup>. It is not admitted even by the Bol-

<sup>1</sup> Lanigan, I. 156. Innes, p. 37.<sup>2</sup> "Patrick went to the south to study, and he read the Canons with German (Germanus of Auxerre)." Nennius, *Historia Britonum*, edited by Dr Todd, Dublin, 1848.<sup>3</sup> Lanigan, I. 174, *Acta SS. Mart.* 17. Innes, p. 37.<sup>4</sup> Lanigan, I. 180.<sup>5</sup> Lanigan, I. 192. See also Gieseler, II. 81 n.

landists or Colgan, and the absence of any allusion in the saint's Confessions to a consecration by Celestine, where he could hardly have passed it over, is no slight argument against its veracity. In the year 432, however, he would appear on good authority to have been ordained bishop in Gaul, and on hearing of the failure of the mission of Palladius<sup>1</sup>, to have sailed for Ireland with Isserninus, Auxilius, and a few other fellow-labourers.

Landing, in the same year, somewhere on the coast of the present county of Wicklow, he and his companions were, at first, received with hostility, and were obliged to return to their boat, and seek a more favourable spot. Sailing northwards along the coast, they put in at Holm-patrick, where they stayed some time. After gathering a few converts in this neighbourhood, St Patrick repaired to the Bay of Dundrum, and landing with his companions advanced some little way into the interior. They had not gone far before they encountered a native chieftain named Dichu at the head of a band of men, who, mistaking their leader for the chief of one of the many pirate crews which then often appeared upon the coast, was on the point of putting him to death. But struck by the reverend appearance of the missionary, and seeing that he and his companions were unarmed, he stayed his hand, and hospitably received them at his house. In frequent interviews he now heard the doctrines of the faith, and was baptized with his whole family. He also bestowed upon his instructor the ground, on which his barn was erected; and here arose the celebrated church called *Sabhall Padruic*, "the barn of Patrick," the ruins of which may still be traced at Saul, in the county of Down. The

*Lands in Ire-  
land.*

<sup>1</sup> In the *Book of Armagh* we read, "The death of Palladius among the Britons was soon heard of, for his disciples, i. e. Augustinus, Benedictus and the rest, returning, related in Ebmoira, the circumstances of his

death." Sir W. Betham, *Researches*, p. 306. "It is more than probable that it was at Bray, Patrick landed." O'Donovan, *note in Annals of the Four Masters*, I. 130.

## CHAP. III.

A.D. 433.

*His Missionary  
toors in Dalaradia.*

same chief became henceforth St Patrick's constant friend, and the spot, where he obtained a site for his first church, was always a favourite resort of the saint.

*Preaches before the  
chiefs at Tara.*

Leaving Saul, the missionary proceeded northward to Clanebois in Dalaradia, hoping to convert his old master Milcho. In this he was disappointed. Nothing would induce the old chief to receive the man who had been once his slave, or to forsake the paganism of his forefathers. His obstinate refusal has been exaggerated in the legends, and he is represented as having burnt himself, at the approach of the missionary, on a funeral pile, together with his family and his goods. His journey thus ineffectual, St Patrick once more took ship, and, returning to the district where Dichu resided, preached with success for some time in that neighbourhood. Thence sailing southward, he determined to visit the famous hill of Tara, where King Leogaire was about to hold a great religious festival, in the presence of all his tributary princes, his chieftains, and Druids. Accompanied by his favourite disciple, the boy Benignus, whom he had lately baptized, the saint went on his way thither, intending in this stronghold of Druidism to celebrate the approaching festival of Easter, and to preach the Gospel to the assembled chiefs. It was Easter-Eve when he reached the neighbourhood of Tara, and having erected a tent, he made preparations for spending the night with his companions, and kindled a fire, either, according to some legends, as a part of the Paschal solemnities, or simply for the purpose of preparing food. As the smoke curled upwards in the evening air, it was observed by the Druids in the king's tents, and caused the greatest consternation. To kindle any fire, during the solemn assembly of the chiefs, before the king had lighted the sacred fire in the palace of Tara, was a sin of the greatest enormity; and the Druids did not scruple to warn the king, "if that fire be not extinguished this night,



unto him, whose fire it shall be, shall belong the sovereignty of Ireland for ever<sup>1</sup>."

CHAP. III.

A.D. 433.

*Opposition of the Magi.*

It is possible that the Magi had heard of the strange doctrines which were now gaining ground in the British islands, and they hoped thus to alienate the monarch's mind against any preachers of the same. However this may have been, messengers were sent to discover the authors of the sacrilege, and to order them to appear before the king. When they presented themselves, instead of being put to death, their fearlessness won for them the attention of the king and his nobles. On the following day St Patrick again addressed the chiefs, and proclaimed the doctrines of the faith. Leogaire himself, indeed, did not profess to be a convert, but he gave permission to the man of God to preach the word on condition that he did not disturb the peace of the kingdom<sup>2</sup>. During the ensuing week, therefore, when the great public games were celebrated at Tailten, the missionary and his companions addressed themselves to the brothers of the king, and by one at least were so favourably received, that he professed himself a believer, received baptism, and is said to have given up the site of his own castle for a church.

The impression thus made upon the chiefs was soon shared by their subjects, and though it is utterly impossible to arrange with accuracy the subsequent missionary tours of the saint, it is certain that in Westmeath, in Connaught, Mayo, and Ulster, whither he successively went, his labours were blessed with signal success. Once or twice<sup>3</sup>, indeed,

*Tours in Connaught, Mayo, and Ulster.*

<sup>1</sup> From the *Life of St Patrick* in the *Leabhar Breac*. Todd's *Life*, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup> Lanigan, I. 233. *Vita Tripart.* II. 8. It was on this occasion, when brought before the king, that he is said to have composed the hymn called *St Patrick's Armour*. See Petrie's *Tara Hill*, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> "Whoever will read the *Tripartite Life of St Patrick*," says O'-

Donovan, "will find that the Pagan Irish made several attempts at murdering Patrick, and that he had frequently but a narrow escape. He will be also convinced that our modern popular writers have been guilty of great dishonesty in representing the labours of Patrick as not attended with much difficulty." *Annals of the Four Masters*, I. 131.

## CHAP. III.

A.D. 434.

he was nearly being put to death through the opposition of the Druids, but the protection of the native princes stayed their intentions, and he was suffered to continue his work. Having destroyed the great idol Crom-Cruach<sup>1</sup>, on the plain of Magh Slecht, he set out for Connaught, the scene of his greatest triumphs. At Tir-Amhalgaidh, in Mayo, he was met by the seven sons of the king, and in a full assembly before them and their people he proclaimed the message of the Gospel<sup>2</sup>. The young princes were on this occasion so affected by his earnestness and zeal, that they speedily submitted to baptism, and their example was followed by several thousands of their subjects<sup>3</sup>.

*Subject of his  
preaching.*

So far as we can judge, it was not a merely nominal conversion of the people through their chiefs that he sought. He strove to plant deep the foundations of the Church. Instant in season and out of season, he repaired with his disciples and assistants wherever an opportunity of preaching the word presented itself, collected assemblies in the open air, read the Scriptures, and explained their contents. To the worshippers of the powers of nature, and especially the sun and other heavenly bodies, he proclaimed that the great luminary which "ruled the day" had no self-originated existence, but was created by One whom he taught them to call "God the Father." "Beside Him," said the missionary, "there is no other God, nor ever was, nor will be. He was in the beginning, before all things, unbegotten, and from Him all things take their beginning, both visible and invisible<sup>4</sup>." He told them next "of His only-

<sup>1</sup> O'Curry's *Lect.* p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> O'Donovan's *Tribes and Customs of Hy-Fiachrach*, p. 310 n. and Addenda. Ussher's *Primordia*, p. 864. *Annals of the Four Masters*, I. 141 n.

<sup>3</sup> "This conversion is mentioned in most of the lives of St Patrick, with more or less circumstances, and has been recorded by Nennius

and other writers." Lanigan, I. 253. Döllinger, II. 23. "Duodecim millia hominum, in unâ regione Connatiâ ad fidem Christi convertit, et baptizavit: et septem reges (= Amalgaidi filios) in uno die baptizavit." Nennius.

<sup>4</sup> S. Patricii *Confessio*, O'Connor, *Script. Hibern.* I. pp. cviii, cxvii.

begotten Son, Jesus Christ, who had become man, had conquered death, and ascended into heaven, where He sat far above all principality and power, and whence He would hereafter come to judge both the quick and the dead, and reward every man according to his deeds." "Those" he declared "who believed in Him would rise again in the glory of the true Sun, that is, in the glory of Jesus Christ, being by redemption sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ, of Whom, and by Whom, and to Whom are all things. Through Him shall we reign; for the sun, which we see, rises at His bidding, for our sakes, day by day; but his splendour will never last or continue, and all his worshippers will suffer terrible punishment. We believe in and adore the *true Sun*, Jesus Christ. He will never wane or set, nor will any perish who do His will, but they shall live for ever, even as He liveth for ever, with God the Father Almighty, and the Holy Spirit, world without end." Such we may believe, from his *Confession*, was the Gospel he preached, and his words, confirmed and illustrated by his own intrepid zeal, ardent love, and sincere and devoted life, made a deep impression on the minds of the Celtic chiefs. With the religious enthusiasm deeply seated in the primitive Celtic character<sup>1</sup>, their hearts were touched, and they welcomed the missionary, as, many years before, the people of Galatia had welcomed the Apostle of the Gentiles, and believed the word that he preached<sup>2</sup>.

In the year A.D. 439 the labours of St Patrick were lightened by the arrival of the bishops Secundinus, Auxilius, and Isserninus, whom he had sent either to Gaul or

CHAP. III.

A.D. 436.

A.D. 439.

Arrival of Secundinus, Isserninus, and Auxilius.

<sup>1</sup> See Goldwin Smith's *Irish History and Irish Character*, pp. 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> The *Annals of Ulster* record, at the year 438, the composition of the *Chronicon Magnum*, or *Seanchus Mor*, a body of laws, of which it is highly probable that St Patrick, as-

sisted by one of the bards converted to Christianity, may have laid the foundation, revising such of the Pagan laws and usages of the country as were inconsistent with the doctrines of the Gospel." Petrie's *Antiquities of Tara Hill*, pp. 47-54.

Britain to receive consecration. Their coming enabled him to extend the sphere of his operations, and he now undertook missionary tours in Ulster, Leinster, and Cashel. These continued for several years, and were spent in preaching, baptizing new converts, and erecting churches. Knowing well how much his own acquaintance with the native language<sup>1</sup> had contributed to his success, he laboured diligently to establish a native ministry wherever he went. Cautiously selecting from the higher classes, those whose piety and intelligence seemed to fit them for the work of the ministry, he established seminaries and monastic schools, where they were trained for this high employment. To these schools the young of both sexes flocked with extraordinary eagerness, and here they learnt the alphabet the missionary had invented for their instruction.

It was probably while labouring somewhere in the south-eastern part of Munster, that the incident occurred which drew forth the letter, which has come down to us, wherein we see him endeavouring to check the nefarious system of piracy and slave-dealing from which he himself had suffered so bitterly<sup>2</sup>. A native prince, named Coroticus, though apparently professing Christianity<sup>3</sup>, had set out either from Wales or Cornwall, and descending on the Irish coast, with a band of armed followers, had murdered several of the natives, and carried off a considerable number with the intention of disposing of them as slaves. This outrage was perpetrated in one of the districts where St Patrick had been baptizing, and on the very day after<sup>4</sup> the neophytes arrayed in white baptismal robes had re-

*Letter to Coroticus.*

<sup>1</sup> "Etsi Latinam linguam dum Galliam et Italiam incoluit, didicit, assidue tamen Ibernis populis patriâ linguâ in concionibus et hortatibus loquutus est, tum et Ibernice scripsit Proverbiorum librum, grande opus de Ibernâ antiquitatibus, epistolâs, et alia opuscula, quæ temporum injuria et clades absumpsit."

Villanueva, p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> O'Connor's *Script. Hibern.* i. cxvii.

<sup>3</sup> Sir W. Betham's *Antiquities*, p. 276.

<sup>4</sup> "Postera die qua chrismati neophyti in veste candida, dum fides flagrabat in fronte ipsorum, crudeliter trucidati atque mactati sunt." *Ep. ad Coroticum*, O'Connor, i. cxvii.

ceived the chrism, and the rite of confirmation. Indignant at this cruelty, St Patrick wrote a letter<sup>1</sup>, which he sent by one of his companions, requesting Coroticus to restore the baptized captives, and some portion of the booty. But his request being treated with contempt and scorn, he composed another circular epistle, in which, as "a bishop established in Ireland," he inveighs in the strongest terms against the cruelty of the marauding tribe and its chief. He contrasts his conduct with that of the Roman and Gallic Christians, who were in the habit of sending priests with large sums of money to ransom Christian captives from the power of the Franks, and concludes by threatening him and his followers with excommunication unless he make restitution, and desist in future from his marauding habits. What indeed was the result of this circular epistle is not known, but it is to be feared that the efforts of the Saint were not very successful. His lot was cast in troublous times, and it was easier to induce the various tribes to accept a nominal profession of Christianity, than to resist the temptation to trade in slaves; at any rate this inhuman traffic was in full activity in the tenth century, between England and the sister Isle, and the port of Bristol was one of its principal centres.

CHAP. III.  
A.D. 440-452.

Meanwhile, after a sojourn of two years in the district of Louth, and parts of Ulster, St Patrick reached the district of Macha, a small territory, but containing the royal city of Emania, the residence of the kings of Ulster<sup>2</sup>. Here he was heartily welcomed by Daire, a wealthy chief, who made over to him a pleasant piece of ground on an eminence called *Druim-sailech*, or the "Hill of the Wil-

Further Missionary tours.

<sup>1</sup> "Misi Epistolam cum sancto presbytero, quem ego ex infantia docui cum clericis, ut nobis aliquid indulgeretur de præda vel de captivis baptizatis quos ceperant; sed cachinnos fecerunt de illis." *Ep. ad*

*Coroticum*. Lanigan, i. 296.

<sup>2</sup> "The remains of its earthen embankment exist under the name of *the Navan*, about two miles west of Armagh." *Vita S. Columbæ* by Adamnan, Ed. Reeves, p. 287 n.

CHAP. III.

A.D. 456.

lows<sup>1</sup>." The spot pleased St Patrick, and he determined to erect here a church, and a cloister for the clergy and the many ardent candidates for the monastic life who flocked to him from all sides, and of both sexes<sup>2</sup>. The foundations of the church were accordingly laid, and round it rose by degrees, the city of Armagh, the ecclesiastical metropolis of Ireland, and here its founder spent the remainder of his life, only leaving it now and then to visit his favourite retreat at Saul, round which clustered the memories of his earliest labours, and of his first convert Dichu.

*Early Irish Synods.*

A.D. 456.

Here, too, when the see was established, having called to his aid the bishops Auxilius and Isserninus, who next to himself were best qualified for the work by age and long experience, he proceeded to hold several synods, and to make regulations for the general government of the Irish churches. The canons of two of these have been preserved; one of which is called simply the *Synod of St Patrick*, and the other the *Synod of Bishops, that is, Patrick, Auxilius, and Isserninus*. "Under the head of the former," says Dr Lanigan<sup>3</sup>, "are some canons, which seem to have been enacted at a later period, or perhaps in some other country; but among the canons of the latter, with one or two exceptions, we meet with nothing to make us doubt that it was really held in Ireland, and by those bishops." They give us the idea of a church which had attained considerable maturity, they mention not only bishops, priests, and deacons, abbots, monks, and nuns, but inferior orders, such as the *ostiarii* and *lectores*. In reference to the discipline of the clergy they are very

<sup>1</sup> "The *Annals of Ulster* refer the foundation of Armagh to 444." O'Donovan in *Annals of Four Masters*, p. 143. The *Annals of the Four Masters* to 457.

<sup>2</sup> "Accepit ergo ab eo (Daire) S. Patricius prædium optatum et

placitum sibi, et ædificavit in eo monasteria et habitationes religiosorum virorum; in quo loco jam civitas est *Ardmach* nominata sedes et episcopatus et regiminis Hiberniæ." Probus, III. 7. Lanigan, I. 314.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* I. 331.

strict<sup>1</sup>. A clerk must not wander about from place to place; in a strange diocese he must not baptize, nor offer the Eucharist, nor discharge any spiritual function. A bishop, in like manner, must not presume to ordain in a diocese not his own, without the permission of its diocesan, but on the Lord's day he may assist in the offering of the Eucharist; a priest who has been excommunicated, may be again admitted to the communion, but can never recover his degree; if he come from Britain, he cannot be allowed to officiate without a letter of recommendation; if he receive another who has been excommunicated, both must suffer the same punishment. The sixth Canon directs the wife of a priest, when abroad, to appear veiled<sup>2</sup>; in the eighth we trace signs of the ancient combat of the "trial of truth;" "if a clerk," it enacts, "become surety for a heathen, and be deceived, he shall pay the debt; if he enter into the lists with him, he shall be put out of the pale of the Church<sup>3</sup>." The sixteenth lays a penance on those, who fall into any heathen practice, or from a desire to search into future events, have recourse to soothsaying, or the inspection of the entrails of beasts. Another expressly forbids any alms offered by pagans being received into the Church.

These canons indicate a certain amount of progress in the Church for which they are designed, and shew that the work of the missionary had begun to take root. This work he still continued; even in his retirement at Armagh, and Saul, he was still content to spend and be spent in behalf of the Church he had founded and loved so well, and which, though solicited again and again, nothing, not even the

<sup>1</sup> Spelman's *Concilia Orbis Britannici*, pp. 52, 53, Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, p. 137, and n.

<sup>2</sup> "Quicumque Clericus... si non more Romano capilli ejus tonsi sint, et uxor ejus si non velato capite ambulaverit, pariter a laicis contemnen-

tur, et ab ecclesia separentur." Spelman, p. 52, Todd's *Irish Church*, p. 33. Ware. p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> "Clericus si pro gentili homine fidei jussor fuerit... si armis compugnaverit cum illo, merito extra ecclesiam computetur." Spelman, p. 52.

CHAP. III.  
A. D. 460—465.

wish to see his relatives, could induce him to leave. In his *Confession*, written when now advanced in years, and expecting “the time of his departure,” he touchingly describes how he had often been requested to revisit his kinsmen according to the flesh, but how a sense of the spiritual bond to the flock he had begotten in Christ, ever retained him in Ireland. He wrote this treatise, he declares, for the sake of these his kinsfolk, that they, especially those who had opposed his advancement to the episcopate, might know how the Lord had prospered his work in the land of his captivity; he reviews his labours, and calls God to witness how he had sought the spiritual advancement of his people. And, indeed, making all due allowance for the circumstances of the times, his work had been no trivial one. He and his associates had made for themselves by the labour of their own hands, civilized dwellings amid the tangled forests, and the dreary morass. At a time when clan-feuds and bloodshed were rife and common, and kings rose and fell suddenly from their thrones, and all else was stormy and changeful, they had covered the island with monasteries, where very soon the Scriptures began to be studied, ancient books collected and read, and missionaries were trained for their own country, and, as we shall see, for the rest of Europe. Every monastic establishment was an outpost of civilization amidst the surrounding heathenism; and to reclaim the tribes from their superstitions, to revise their old laws and usages, was a work in which the Irish monks engaged, as the one object of their lives.

*His death.*

The Apostle of Ireland lived to a good old age, and the sunset of his life was calm and peaceful. It was while he was in retirement at Saul that he was seized with his last illness. Perceiving that his end drew nigh, and desiring that Armagh should be the resting-place of his remains, he set out thither, but was unable to continue the journey. Increasing weakness, and, as it seemed to him,



the voice of an angel, bade him return to the Church of his first convert, and there, after a short interval<sup>1</sup>, the patron-saint of Ireland departed this life, leaving behind him the visible memorials of a noble work nobly done in a Church, which was for a long time the light of the West, being protected by native chiefs<sup>2</sup>, and superintended by a numerous native clergy.

<sup>1</sup> On the vexed question of the date of St Patrick's death, see the arguments in Lanigan, I. pp. 355—363. He decides for A.D. 465, the gene-

rally received date is March 17, 493.

<sup>2</sup> On the gradual spread of Christianity among the native chiefs, see Lanigan, I. 394.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ST COLUMBA AND THE CONVERSION OF THE PICTS.

A.D. 480—597.

“Insula Pictorum quedam monstratur in oris  
Fluctivago suspensa salo, cognominis Eo,  
Qua sanctus Domini requiescit carne Columba.”

CHAP. IV. BUT “though dead,” the Apostle of Ireland still continued  
A.D. 405—490. to speak in the unremitting energy of his successors. Benignus, the next metropolitan of Armagh, who had been in early youth attracted by the winning influence of St Patrick, and had been his most constant companion during the entire period of his mission, preached the Gospel in those parts of the country which his predecessor had not visited<sup>1</sup>. With a view to the further consolidation of the Church he set the example, which his successors Jarlath, Cormac, and Dubtach studiously followed, of increasing the number of schools and monastic foundations throughout the country<sup>2</sup>. Amongst these may be mentioned the schools of Armagh, of Fiech at Sletty, of Mel at Ardagh, of Moetha in Louth, of Olean at Derkan, of Finnian at Clonard, of Congall at Bangor, in the county of Down, all which were founded at various periods during the fifth and sixth centuries. Nor was provision wanting for such women as wished to give themselves up to a monastic life. Societies were formed, of which that of St Brigid at Kildare was the

*Rise of Irish Schools.*

<sup>1</sup> Lanigan, I. 374.

<sup>2</sup> Lanigan, I. 402, 403, and 464.

most celebrated<sup>1</sup>. Into these were admitted all who were approved, and they spent such time as was not devoted to prayer and psalmody, in visiting the sick and relieving the poor. Their clothing was coarse, their food of the simplest kind, and each member was bound by vows of celibacy which could not be violated on pain of excommunication. The foundress, sprung of an illustrious family, had fixed her convent at Kildare, or the "Cell of the Oak," at the earnest request of the men of Leinster, and the extraordinary veneration in which she was held attracted such a crowd of pilgrims, penitents and beggars to her cell, that a town rapidly rose up, and became the seat of a bishop, who presided over all the churches and communities belonging to her order, which spread on every side throughout the land.

CHAP. IV.  
A.D. 490—521.

Such establishments were in keeping with the spirit of the age, and the strictness of the monastic rule had charms not to be resisted. The system which had found ardent votaries in the Roman capital, had peopled the desolate Thebaid, and filled Jerome's cells at Bethlehem with devoted inmates, found equal favour with the enthusiastic Celts. Many even of the Irish bishops ordained, at this period, in unusual numbers<sup>2</sup>, undertook the superintendence of a conventual house in addition to their own more peculiar duties. Thus the monastic organization was more extended than the parochial, and the abbot-bishop, who at first gathered around him a society, and erected his monastery amidst the woods and morasses, and cultivated the soil with his own hands, saw, before long, towns and cities spring up around his cell or church, and he was fain to undertake the spiritual government of the adjacent district<sup>3</sup>. And as they

*Irish Missionary zeal.*

<sup>1</sup> *Cogitosa Vita S. Brigid.* cap. xxxv, Colgan's *Tr. Th.* p. 523.

<sup>2</sup> Innes' *Civil and Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, p. 84, and Appendix A in Reeves' *Ecclesiastical*

*Antiquities*, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> Todd's *History of the Irish Church*, p. 34. "Most of the ancient sees of Ireland appear to have had a monastic origin, the founders

## CHAP. IV.

A.D. 521.

were the heads of missionary outposts in their own country, they soon originated other centres of civilization, and the charity which began at home reflected its influence all the more abroad. The piety of the Irish monasteries did not stagnate in an unworthy unselfishness, but with a surprising steadfastness they copied the noble example of Ireland's Apostle, and sent forth many an ardent labourer into distant fields now "white unto the harvest."

*St Columba.*

A.D. 521.

*Legends of his  
C. & of the Iles.*

Amongst those who thus went forth, few occupy a more prominent place in missionary annals than the founder of the far-famed monastery of Hy or Iona. Columba, or according to his Irish name, *Colum*, was born at Gartan, among the wildest of the Donegal mountains, in the year A.D. 521. His father Fedhlimidh was one of the clan, which occupied and gave name to the country round Gartan, and belonged to the royal families of Ireland and Dalriada. His mother Eithne was sprung from a Leinster family, which also claimed acquaintance with a powerful provincial chief. Enthusiastic biographers have related, how before his birth, his mother saw in a vision, a beautiful robe placed in her hands by an angel adorned with pictures of flowers of every hue, which after a while he took from her, and suffered to float in mid air; and as it floated, it grew more and more, till at length it covered all the mountains and country round, and there came a voice, saying, "Be not sorrowful, O woman, for thou shalt have a son who shall be as one of the prophets of God, and is foreordained by God to be the guide of innumerable souls to their heavenly home."

*His Baptism.*

At his baptism by the presbyter Cruithnechan, the boy received the name of "*Colum*," to which was added after-

being either bishops, or presbyters who associated bishops with them in the government of their houses. But in such cases the memory of the founder was revered more as the father or first abbot than as bishop,

and hence it was that the term *Coworba*, which was applied to a successor in the government of the institution, had reference to his abbatial, not episcopal office." Reeves' *Eccles. Antiq.* p. 136.

wards "*cille*," or "of the church," from his devotion to the "cell" where he first sojourned<sup>1</sup>. From Doire-Eithne, or "the Oak-forest of Eithne," a hamlet in Donegal, he was removed at an early age to the famous school of St Finnian of Moville<sup>2</sup>. Here his diligence won for him the approbation of his instructor, and he was promoted to the office of deacon<sup>3</sup>. Leaving the monastery of Finnian, he repaired to Leinster, and placed himself under an eminent Christian bard named Gemman. We next find him at the famous monastic seminary of Clonard, over which another Finnian presided<sup>4</sup>. The early years of his new teacher had been spent in Britain, in the society of the Welch saints David, Gildas, and Cadoc<sup>5</sup>; shortly after his return he established his monastic school at Clonard, which soon acquired an extraordinary celebrity, and was the resort of numbers of ardent students. An old writer, quoted in Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, has described St Finnian "as a scribe most learned to teach the law of God's commandments. He was most merciful and compassionate, and sincerely sympathized with the infirmities of the sick, and the sorrows of the afflicted." "In every work of mercy," he continues, "he was most ready with his assistance, and healed with mildness the mental and bodily ills of all who came to him. He exercised towards himself the strictest discipline, to leave others a good example, and abhorred all carnal and mental vices. His ordinary food was bread and herbs, his drink water; but on the festivals of the Church, he ate bread made of corn, and drank a cup of ale, or whey. His bed was not a soft and easy couch, but the bare ground, with a stone for his pillow. In a word, he was full of com-

*His instructors.*

<sup>1</sup> Dr Reeves' edition of Adamnan's *Life of Columba*, Pref. p. lxx. n.

<sup>2</sup> In Down. See Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore*, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> "Et a puero Christiano deditus

tirocinio, et sapientie studius, integritatem corporis...custodiens." *Vit. Adam.* p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> *Vita S. Columb.* II. 25, and Reeves' note.

<sup>5</sup> Lanigan, I. 464.

CH. IV. passion towards all other men, but of strictness and severity  
 towards himself<sup>1</sup>."

A. D. 521—540.

*His ordination.*

With the concurrence of several prelates, the pupil of Finnian was sent to Etchen, an anchorite bishop of Clonfad in Westmeath, to be raised to the episcopal order<sup>2</sup>. According to an old legend, he was ploughing in the field when Columba came to his cell, and, on hearing the name of his visitor, gave him a hearty welcome, and a promise that the purpose of his errand should be granted. But by a mistake, not easy to understand, Etchen fixed on the wrong office, and instead of consecrating him a bishop, admitted him only to the order of the priesthood. He offered, the legend continues, on discovering his mistake, to rectify it, but this Columba declined, believing that it was a providential interposition.

*Founds various monasteries.*

Whether this was so, or whether the story is only a fiction of a later age, certain it is that Columba never rose higher than the order of the priesthood. After the period of study and contemplation was over, he was desirous himself of emulating the example of his instructor, and laid the foundations of a monastery, on a hill covered with oaks near Lough-Foyle. The site was given him by one of his relatives, a prince of the county, and here rose in process of time the city of Derry. This, however, was only the first of many cells and churches of which he was the founder. The most celebrated next to Derry was that of Dair-magh, or Durrow, in the diocese of Meath, of which Bede has made special mention<sup>3</sup>. In the foundation of this and his

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Finnian*, Colgan's *Act. SS.* p. 397, quoted in Todd's *History of the Irish Church*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Colgan's *Tr. Th.* p. 397. Lani-gan, II. 126. Todd's *Obits of Christ. Church*, p. liv. On consecration by a single bishop see Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 349. Johannes Major says of the consecration of Servanus by Palladius, "Ex isto patet quod

episcopus in necessitate ab uno episcopo consecratur; et non est de episcopi essentia, quod a tribus ordinetur," quoted in Ussher, *Works*, VI. p. 212. Bingham, Book II. ch. x. 6, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, III. 4. "Fecerat autem priusquam Britanniam veniret, monasterium nobile in Hibernia, quod a copia roborum *Dearmach* lingua Scottorum, hoc est, Campus robo-

other cells Columba was diligently employed till the year A.D. 561, when he left Ireland on his famous mission to the highlands of Scotland. The precise occasion of his departure is involved in much obscurity. Later writers, whose single object was to extol the virtues of the saint, saw in it only the result of an ardent missionary spirit. But very early Irish traditions refuse to regard it in this light. They represent his withdrawal from his own country as a sort of penance imposed upon him, with his own consent, in consequence of a feud, which led to the battle of Cooldrevny, and which "is mentioned," remarks Dr Reeves<sup>1</sup>, "by Adamnan in two instances, as a kind of Hegira in the saint's life." According to one tradition, this feud arose out of causes too quaint and characteristic of the times to be entirely passed by.

It would seem that on one occasion<sup>2</sup> Columba paid a visit to St Finnian at *Drom Finn* in Ulster, and borrowed his copy of the Psalter<sup>3</sup>. Anxious to retain a copy of the book, and yet afraid that Finnian would not suffer him if he made the request, he resorted to stratagem to effect his purpose. Every day he repaired to Finnian's church, and remained there till the people had all left, when he sat down and made a hurried transcription of the volume. The circumstance did not escape the notice of Finnian, but he resolved to say nothing about the matter till Columba had concluded his labours, when he sent to him and demanded the book, reminding him that as the original was his, so also was the copy which had been made without his permission<sup>4</sup>. Columba was very indignant, and refused out-

*Legend of St Finnian's psalter.*

rum, cognominatur." Reeves' *Adamnan*, lib. III. 15. Lanigan, II. 118.

<sup>1</sup> Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 248. Appendix B. See also *Originals Parochiales Scotiæ*, Vol. II. p. 285. Innes' *Civil and Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, p. 149.

<sup>2</sup> O'Curry's *Lectures*, p. 328. O'Donovan's *Notes on the Annals of*

*the Four Masters*, I. 194.

<sup>3</sup> Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 249.

<sup>4</sup> Colgan's *Tr. Th.* p. 409. "Causa utrinque audita Rex, seu partium rationes male pensans, seu in alteram privato affectu magis propendens, pro Finneno sententiam pronuntiat, et sententiam ipse Hilernico versu abinde in hunc usque diem inter

## CHAP. IV.

A.D. 561.

*Division of  
King Diarmaid.*

right to comply. After some words, it was agreed to refer the dispute to Diarmaid, the king of Ireland. Accordingly the rivals repaired to Tara, and were admitted to an audience with the king. After hearing the case, Diarmaid gave the remarkable judgment which to this day is a proverb in Ireland; "*le gach boin a boinin*," said he, that is, "to every cow belongeth her little cow, or calf," and so to every book belongeth its son-book or copy; therefore the book you wrote, O Colum, belongs by right to Finnian. "That is an unjust decision, O Diarmaid," was Colum's reply, "and I will avenge it on you<sup>1</sup>."

At this very time it so happened that the son of the king's steward and the son of the king of Connaught, who was a hostage of Diarmaid, were playing a game of hurling on the green before the king's palace. A dispute arose between them, in the midst of which the royal hostage struck his antagonist with his hurley, and killed him. Thereupon the young prince fled for sanctuary to Colum, who was still in the king's presence. But the latter ordered him to be dragged away, and he was put to death for having desecrated the precincts of the palace against the ancient law and usage. At this insult Columba was still more indignant, and having with difficulty escaped from the court, made his way to the mountains of his native Donegal. Here he was in the midst of relatives and friends, who took up his quarrel, and with the men of Tyrone and the king of Connaught, marched to Cooldrevny, between Sligo and Dromcliff, where a battle was fought, and Diarmaid was discomfited. After a while, however, he succeeded in

*Book of  
Cooldrevny.*

Hibernos famoso in hunc modum expressit: *Le gach boin a boinin, aen le gach leabhar a leabhran*, id est, *Buculus est matris, libri suus esto libellus.*" O'Curry's *Lectures*, p. 328. *Four Masters*, i. 193.

<sup>1</sup> The MS. Psalter was returned to Columba, and was ever after

known as the *Cathach*, (= "the Book of Battle,") and was preserved for ages in the family of O'Donnell: it is now in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy. Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 249. *Annals of the Four Masters*, i. 193. Sir W. Betham's *Antiquarian Researches*, i. 109.



making peace with Columba and his friends. But the saint's conscience would not forgive him for having been the cause of so much bloodshed, and he himself became the subject of ecclesiastical censure. A synod was summoned at Teltown, in Meath, and it was agreed that Columba, as "a man of blood," and the author of so great slaughter, ought to quit his country, and win over from the heathen to Christ as many souls as perished in the battle<sup>1</sup>. In this sentence, according to the legend, all present concurred except Brendan of Birr, who protested against it, and Finnian of Moville, the old instructor of Columba, who expressed his veneration for his former pupil<sup>2</sup>.

CHAP. IV.  
A.D. 561.

Whether this account has any substratum of truth, or is only to be regarded as the legendary creation of a later age, it is difficult to determine. The monastic biographers of the saint have naturally said little about the matter. Dr Reeves, the learned editor of *Adamnan*, admits "the martial propensities" of the great missionary of Iona, but he bids us remember the "complexion of the times in which he was born, and the peculiar condition of society in his day, which required even women to enter battle, and justified ecclesiastics in the occasional exercise of warfare." He admits also that "primitive Irish ecclesiastics, and especially the superior class, commonly known as saints, were very impatient of contradiction, and very resentful of injury;" and he even thinks it possible that some current stories of the saint's warlike temperament may have suggested the somewhat guarded and qualified manner in which Bede speaks of him<sup>3</sup>, and may have given a tinge

*Martial propensities of St Columba.*

<sup>1</sup> "Post hæc in Synodo sanctorum Hiberniæ gravis querela contra Sanctum Columbam, tanquam authorem tam multi sanguinis effusi, instituta est. Unde communi decreto censuerunt ipsum debere tot animas, a gentilitate conversas, Christo lucrari, quot in isto prelio interierunt." Colgan's *Acta SS.* 645.

Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 251. For notice of other battles in which Columba is said to have been engaged see *Ibid.* p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Reeves' *Adamnan*, Præf. lxxvii. See also O'Donovan's *Four Masters*, 1. 193 n.

<sup>3</sup> "Qualiscunque fuerit ipse, nos hoc de illo certum tenemus, quia

CHAP. IV.

A.D. 563.

*Sets out for  
Scotland.*

to some of the legends concerning his personal appearance. On whichever side the truth lies, certain it is that in the year 563 St Columba, now in his forty-second year, having collected twelve companions<sup>1</sup>, took leave of his country, and in a wicker boat covered with skins made for the western coast of Scotland.

It is possible that the provincial king of Kintyre and Argyre may have invited him to his kingdom, for he was allied to him by blood, and it was not a strange country to which he now retired. About sixty years before, a portion of the family of Eire, chief of the Irish Dalriada, had passed over with a considerable body of followers to the nearest part of Argyreshire, where they had settled, and founded the kingdom of British Scotia, or Dalriada<sup>2</sup>. As yet the colony had not acquired much strength, or pushed its dominions far beyond its original boundaries, and Bruide, the chief of the Picts, was a prince of considerable power, and could bring a formidable force to engage in the constant wars of which Scotland was at this time the theatre. These wars gave the people but little leisure for agricultural pursuits, and their chief occupation consisted in pasturing their flocks and herds. Numbering, it has been thought<sup>3</sup>, scarcely more than twenty thousand, or about half the present population of Glasgow, they were scattered at distant intervals over the country, the central district of which consisted of one vast forest, called the "Caledonian wood," abounding in enormous wild boars and formidable packs of wolves. The rest of the country was bare and mountainous, and

reliquit successores magna continetia ac divino amore regularique institutione insignes." *II. E.* III. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Their names are given in Dr Reeves' *Adamnan*, pp. 245 and 299, and the *Orig. Paroch. Scotiæ*, Vol. II. 285.

<sup>2</sup> See the Dean of Lismore's *Book of Ancient Gaelic Poetry*, p. xxiv. and *Orig. Paroch. Scotiæ*, Vol. II.

Part I. "The territory occupied by this settlement consisted of the districts of Cowall, Kintyre, Knapdale, Argyll-proper, Lorn, and probably part of Morvern with the islands of Isla, Iona, Arran, and the small islands adjacent."

<sup>3</sup> Cunningham's *Scotland*, I. 47. See Gibbon, III. 266.

covered to a great extent with impassable fens, through which even the natives could with difficulty force their way. For the coast, then, of Argyle St Columba shaped his course, and on Pentecost Eve cast anchor in one of the rocky bays of Iona<sup>1</sup>, an island about three miles long, and a mile broad, and separated by a narrow strait from the Ross of Mull<sup>2</sup>. Situated on the confines of the Pictish and Scottish kingdoms, and subject in a measure to the chiefs of both, it seemed to afford a convenient basis of missionary operations among both people. The Scots, indeed, were Christians in name, but the Northern Picts were still sunk in paganism, and their conversion became the grand object of the missionary's ambition.

His first care, therefore, was to obtain a grant of the island, and when this was freely conceded by Conall<sup>3</sup>, the chief of British Dalriada, he proceeded to erect a monastery on the model, doubtless, of that which had already been raised by his hands under the oaks of Derry. It was of the simplest character, consisting of a number of small wattle-built huts, surrounding a green court. It included, as we gather from incidental notices in *Adamnan*, a chapel, a dwelling-house for the abbot and his monks, another for the entertainment of strangers, a refectory, and kitchen, and outside the trench a rampart<sup>4</sup>, a byre for the cows, a barn and storehouse for the grain, and other outbuildings. All these were constructed of timber or wattles.

Over this little establishment Columba presided. He was the abbot<sup>5</sup>, the "father" of the society, and his authority extended to all such similar societies as he either had

CHAP. IV

A.D. 563.

*Arrives at Iig.*

*Erects a monastery.*

<sup>1</sup> *Origines Parochiales Scotiæ*, Vol. II. p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Topographia Hyensis* in Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 413.

<sup>3</sup> Innes' *Civil and Ecclesiastical History*, p. 151. *Orig. Paroch.* II. 299.

<sup>4</sup> Bede, *H. E.* IV. 28, describes

the monastic vallum (called a *cachel*) of St Cuthbert's little monastery in Farne. See also *Vita S. Cuthberti*, cap. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Abbot, *abbas*, or *pater*, or *sanc-tus pater*, or *sanc-tus senior*, and in the founder's case *patronus*. *Adamnan* passim.

founded in Ireland, or might found in the country of his adoption. In ecclesiastical rank he was a presbyter, he officiated at the altar in the little chapel, and pronounced the benediction, but did not usurp the functions of a bishop<sup>1</sup>. The rest of the community were his "family," his "children;" at first, as we have seen, they were twelve in number, and his companions from Ireland, but before long they received numerous accessions, and included Britons and Saxons. Living together under a common rule, they were to cultivate the virtues of obedience, humility, and chastity, to regard one another as fellow-soldiers of Jesus Christ, and their life as a continual warfare in Christ's cause<sup>2</sup>.

*The Columban Rule.*

Their Rule<sup>3</sup> required of them that morning and evening they should repair to the oratory, and join in the sacred services. Every Wednesday and Friday, except in the interval between Easter and Whitsunday was a fast-day, and no food was taken till the *nona*, except on the occasion of the arrival of a stranger, when the rule was relaxed that they might indulge their national hospitality. The intervals of devotion were employed in reading, writing, and labour. Diligence was inculcated by the exhortations and life of the founder, of whom his biographer says that he allowed no hour to pass during which he was not engaged in prayer, or reading, or writing, or some other employment. "Reading" included chiefly the study of Holy Scripture, especially the Psalter, which was diligently

<sup>1</sup> "Qui non episcopus, sed presbyter exstitit et monachus." Bede, *H. E.* III. 4. "But there were at all times bishops connected with the society resident at Hy or some dependent church, who were subject to the abbot's jurisdiction, and were assigned their stations, or called in to ordain, very much as the bishops of the *Unitas Fratrum* of the present day, being looked upon as essential to the propagation rather than the main-

tenance of the Church." Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup> Reeves, p. 339. Conventual life was with them a "militia Christi," they themselves were *Christi milites*; each one professed his willingness to enter the world only as an *athleta Christi* in the propagation of the Gospel. Bede, III. 3.

<sup>3</sup> St Columba's rule is published by Dr Reeves in Colton's *Visitation of Derry*, p. 109.

committed to memory; and besides this, that of books in the Greek and Latin languages<sup>1</sup>, and the lives of some of the saints. Writing was the subject of especial attention. St Columba was distinguished for his devotion to this occupation, and the Books of Kells and Durrow are wonderful specimens of the perfection which his followers acquired in the arts of transcribing and illuminating service-books and manuscripts. Active labour was also required of every member of the little community; he learnt to till the ground, to sow the corn, to store the grain, to milk the cows, to guide the skiff or coracle on the stormy sea.

In each and all these employments the abbot set an eminent example to the society which he had formed on the sea-girt isle. He had many natural gifts which fitted him for his arduous work. Tall of stature, of a vigorous and athletic frame, of a ruddy and joyous countenance, which, as Adamnan has it, made all who saw him glad, he attracted the hearts of all. He was celebrated also for the powers of his voice, which could be heard, according to his biographer, at an amazing distance<sup>2</sup>, and for a practical turn, which enabled him to render aid when required

*Personal appearance of St Columba.*

<sup>1</sup> "Of Classical MSS. belonging to the Irish school, it will suffice," says Dr Reeves, "to mention two: the one of Horace, *Codex Bernensis* N. 363, 4to, sæc. viii. exeuntis, vel ix. ineuntis, *Scotticè scriptus*: antiquissimus omnium quotque adhuc innotuerunt, et ordine carminum a reliquis mire discrepans." Orellius, *Horatii Opp.* Præf. The other is Priscian: "Grammatica Prisciani *Scotticè scripta*. Codex eximius ordinateque scriptus, qui ob notas interlineares et marginales idiomate et characteribus Scotticis in Europâ sine dubio celebre nomen obtinebit." Zeuss, *Gram. Celt.* Præf. p. xix. "Adamnan's two remaining Latin works give proofs of his classical attainments, and Cummin's *Paschal Epistle* is a remarkable specimen of

the ecclesiastical learning of the day." Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 353. As to writing, Giraldus Cambrensis says of the Book of Kells, "Hæc equidem quanto frequentius et diligentius intueor, semper quasi novis obstupeo semperque magis ac magis admiranda conspicio." *Topog. Hiberniæ*, II. c. 38.

<sup>2</sup> "Aliquando per quatuor stadia, hoc est quingentos passus, aliquando vero per octo, hoc est, mille passus, incomparabili elevata modo audiebatur." *Vita S. Columbae*, I. 37. In this respect the abbot was not unlike the celebrated Edward Irving, of whom it is similarly said that "his voice could be heard half a mile off, and his sentences could be followed at the distance of a quarter of a mile." See Mrs Oliphant's *Life of Edward Irving*.

CHAP. IV.  
A.D. 563-574.

in any emergency. He could bale the boat, grind the corn in the quern or handmill, administer medicine to the sick, and superintend the labours of the farm.

*Success of the Mission.*

When we add to this, that he was of a princely family, we cease to wonder at the influence he rapidly gained over Conall and the other Dalriadic chiefs. Having laid the foundations of his monastic establishment, he set out for the mainland, and sought an interview with the Pictish chief. The latter lived at this time not far from the river Ness, at a spot now identified with *Craig Phadrick*, about two miles south-west of Inverness<sup>1</sup>. Like the pagan master of the Apostle of Ireland, Bruide was exceedingly loath to encounter the missionary, and closed his gates against him. But Columba and his companions Comgall and Cainnech made their way to the king's residence, a humble log-hut, in all probability, with a rampart of uncemented stones; and the sign of the cross had no sooner been made by Columba than, according to his biographer<sup>2</sup>, the gate flew open of its own accord, and admitted the missionary into the presence of the king. Alarmed at this unexpected occurrence, the Pictish chief received his visitor with due reverence, and in spite of all the influence of the Druids to put down the new comer, he agreed to befriend him and aid him in his work, by uniting with Conall in consenting that the island of Hy should be made over to Columba and his companions as the site of a monastic institution, whence his missionary operations might be securely carried forward.

<sup>1</sup> Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 151 n. "Venit (S. Columba) Britanniam regnante Pictis Bridio filio Meilochon, rege potentissimo, nono anno regni hujus." Bede, *H. E.* III. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Adamnan*, II. 35. "The Irish written language was brought over to Scotland in the sixth century by Columba and his clergy, who intro-

duced it, with Christianity, among the Cruithne; where, however, the native dialect must have received some cultivation, as we find that he was opposed by Magi, which implies a literary class among the Pagan Cruithne." Dean of Lismore's Book, p. xxvi.

Thus successful, Columba returned to the island, and the monastic buildings rose in security, and continued to be his head-quarters for a space of thirty-four years. No spot could be more suited than the island for his missionary tours; from it he could easily either make his way himself to the mainland, or direct the numerous bands of labourers who left their wattled cells to preach the word amongst the fastnesses of Pictland<sup>1</sup>.

It is to be wished that his biographer Adamnan had described these tours with greater precision, and had been at more pains to describe the actual missionary work of the saint, than to record the numerous miracles which have been ascribed to him. From the hints, however, scattered up and down his work we gather that Columba frequently visited the institutions he had founded North of the Grampians<sup>2</sup>, that aided by devoted followers he preached the word wherever he could find an ear to listen, erected the humble church, left one or more of his own band to carry on the work, and so passed on sowing the seed<sup>3</sup>. But not content with penetrating Scotland from sea to sea, he and his companions courted new dangers and yet greater hardships. Committing themselves to their boats of skin, they braved the Northern Seas, and carried the Cross into the distant Hebrides and Orkney isles. A monastery was founded at Hymba<sup>4</sup>, over which Columba placed his maternal uncle Ernan; another in Ethica<sup>5</sup>; a third arose at Elena, or Elachnave, "the holy island;" at Skye also he spent some time,

CHAP. IV.  
A.D. 563—574.

*Conversion of  
the Picts.*

<sup>1</sup> Thus Macharius or Mochonna was sent by Columba with twelve companions to the Picts. "Plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos ejus (sc. Columbæ) et in Britannia et in Hibernia propagata sunt." Bede, *H. E.* III. 4.

<sup>2</sup> See *Orig. Paroch. Scotiæ*, II. 286.

<sup>3</sup> Sometimes we read of his preaching the word *per interpretatorem*, as in Adamnan, I. 33, II. 33, which

points to a diversity of Gaelic and Pictish: on other occasions, II. 14, 33, 34, he needed no such assistance.

<sup>4</sup> *Hymba*. See Reeves' notes on Adamnan, I. 45, II. 24, III. 5, 17. One of his chief monasteries among the Picts was at Abernethy in Strath-erne. Innes' *Civil and Eccl. History*, 189.

<sup>5</sup> *Ethica*, Lanigan, II. 168. Adamnan, I. 19, II. 18.

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and erected a monastery and a church, and memorials of his visits still remain in the bay of *Loch Columkille*, and the isle called *Eilean Columkille*<sup>1</sup>. Wherever his disciples went, they carried the fame of their great teacher, and, like bees from a hive, spread forth far and wide, opening up everywhere a fresh centre of missionary enterprise and of civilization amidst the surrounding heathenism. Nor while labouring on the Scottish mainland and amongst the many Western Isles, the "Polynesia" of the missions of that day, did the abbot forget the communities he had established amongst the oaks of Derry and Durrough. His thoughtful anxieties were often occupied with the welfare of the sister churches, and visitors frequently crossed over to Iona, and while there entertained with peculiar hospitality, discussed with the saint the affairs of the churches, and received from him advice and instruction.

A.D. 574.  
*Council of*  
*Druimceatt*.

A.D. 575.

A proof of the ascendancy he had gained over the chiefs was afforded on the death of Conall the Dalriadan king, in the year A.D. 574. He was succeeded by his cousin Aidan, and the new king selected Columba to perform the ceremony of inauguration, which took place in the monastery of Iona<sup>2</sup>. In the following year, he accompanied the newly-elected chief to the Council of Druimceatt in Ireland. Two important points were here to be discussed. The first concerned a dispute between Aidan and the sovereign of Ireland respecting the right of possession to the territory of Dal-aradia, or portions of the county of Antrim. Aidan claimed the territory as an hereditary right, on the ground of his descent from Caibre Riada. The Irish monarch asserted his authority over the whole island, and resented the

<sup>1</sup> See Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 139. *Orig. Paroch.* Vol. II. 354.

<sup>2</sup> *Adamnan*, III. 5. Martene treating "de solempni Regum benedictione," has the following observation on this incident; "Antiquis-

sima omnium, quas inter legendum mihi reperire licuit, ea est quæ a Columba abbate Hyensi facta est jussu angeli in Aidanum Scotorum regem." *De Antiq. Eccl. Ritib.* II. 10.



idea that a foreign prince should enjoy sovereignty in any part of his dominions. The second cause of discussion arose from the overgrown power and degeneracy of the bardic order. How influential this order was we have already seen. The people never tired of listening to their praises of the national valour, or the heroic deeds of some national hero. And the bardic order, strong in their own numbers and the popular affection, did not scruple to defame and lampoon all that gave them any cause of annoyance, or failed to seek their goodwill by costly presents. The consequence was, that many of the influential chiefs, stung by their satirical verses, clamoured for the suppression of the order, and their banishment from the kingdom. Both these points were, therefore, referred for settlement to the Council of Druimceatt. And first the matter in dispute between the two kings was submitted for arbitration to Columba, who declined to give an opinion himself, and referred the assembled chiefs to Colman, an ecclesiastic famed for his legal knowledge. He gave his decision in favour of the Irish monarch, and asserted his right to exact tribute from the Dalriadic province. This, settled to the satisfaction of all, the question of suppressing the bardic order was submitted to the council. And here the great influence of Columba was used in mediating between the exasperated chiefs and the offending bards. Not only fond of poetry, but a poet himself, he ventured to intercede in their behalf, and pointed out the difficulty of exterminating an order so strongly supported by national feeling. He proposed instead that their number should be lessened, and that they should be placed under strict restraints, and so for the future controlled. After some dispute this proposal was carried, and the bardic order was preserved.

When the council had broken up, Columba repaired to the monasteries he had founded before his departure for Scotland. His stay appears to have extended over a con-

## CHAP. IV.

A.D. 560.

*St. Columba's  
later years.*

siderable period, which he employed in inquiring into the welfare of the various religious houses, and arranging matters of discipline and ritual. After the year 580, when the saint became involved in a dispute with St Comgall of Bangor about jurisdiction, and which resulted in the battle of Coleraine between their respective kinsmen, the details of his life are involved in considerable obscurity. It seems probable that he returned to Hy, but revisited Ireland at some period subsequent to the year 585; this last voyage back to his island-home was not unattended with danger. His boat was caught in the eddies of "Breacan's Cauldron," off the coast of Antrim, and he was near meeting the fate of the grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, who gave his name to this "gulp of the sea," as the natives called it. Safe once more in Hy, he busied himself with superintending the labours of his monastic brethren till the year 593, when a sudden sickness, or, as his biographer states, a heavenly mission, warned him that his life was drawing to a close. Four years more, however, were allowed him, and were devoted to reading, study, and prayer. At length the day came when he must quit his little band of labourers for ever. For some time he had had presentiments of its approach, and had conversed on the subject with one of his most intimate friends amongst the brethren, and now he looked forward to his speedy release with the consciousness of one who felt that he had "finished his course," and "kept the faith," and might look humbly for his crown. One Saturday he had gone with one of the brethren to the barn where the corn had been stored, and thanked God that He had provided for the wants of the brotherhood, and that for this year at least there would be no lack of food, though he himself would not share it with them<sup>1</sup>. Then, perceiving the sorrow of his companion, he continued, "This day is in the sacred Scriptures called *Sab-*

<sup>1</sup> *Adamnan*, III. 23.

*batum, or Rest.* And truly will it be a day of Rest to me, for this day I shall bid farewell to the toils of my life, and enter into the rest of heaven. For now my Lord Jesus Christ deigns to invite me, and to Him shall I at midnight depart." Together the two then ascended a little hill, CHAP. IV.  
A.D. 563. which stood above the monastery, and there lifting up both his hands to heaven, the saint bestowed upon it his last blessing. Descending, they entered the little wattled hut, and the saint began to transcribe the thirty-fourth Psalm<sup>1</sup>; but on coming to the words in the eleventh verse, "*They who seek the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good,*" he remarked that he had come to the end of a page, and to a place where he might well stop. "The next words," said he, '*Come, ye children, hearken unto me,*' belong rather to my successor than to me." Then, rising, he went to vespers, and when they were ended, returned to his cell, and sent his last exhortation by his friend to his disciples, urging them to mutual love and good will, and expressing his hope of meeting them hereafter. The night wore on, and on the turn of midnight, as the bell rang for matins, he rose and went to the chapel, and knelt down before the altar in prayer. The lights had not as yet been brought in, but he was supported by his faithful disciple till the rest of the brethren entered, who no sooner saw what was rapidly drawing nigh, than they set up a bitter cry, and burst forth into lamentation. But Columba looked upon them with cheerfulness, and tried to raise his right hand, as if to bless them. His voice failing, he could only make the accustomed sign, and with his hand lifted up in blessing, he breathed his last, on the morning of *His death.*

<sup>1</sup> The thirty-third in the vulgate. Ps. xxxiii. 10, or xxxiv. 11. In Adamnan, it is cited thus, "Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono." On Adamnan's use of the Anti-Hieronymian Latin text,

see Lanigan, *E. II.* II. 247, n. 225. Similarly, in the same chapter, Adamnan cites Prov. xv. 13, thus, "*Corde lætante vultus floret,*" which in the Vulgate runs "*Cor gaudens exhilarat faciem.*"

CHAP. IV. Sunday, June the 9th, 597, in the seventy-seventh year of his age.

A.D. 597.

It may be thought that we have lingered too long over the life of this eminent missionary. But the founder of the far-famed monastery of Hy deserved more than a passing notice. A worthy successor of the Apostle of Ireland, he stands forth as at once the type and the forerunner of that zealous, enthusiastic, missionary zeal which made the name of "Scotsmen" a household word on the European continent during the sixth and three following centuries. Shut out from the influence of the great Church on the banks of the Tiber, by a barrier of Arianism, no less than by the physical barrier of the Alps<sup>1</sup>, and unaffected, at least for many years, by the Teutonic invasions which devastated the English shores, the Churches of St Patrick and Columba developed their peculiar institutions in peace and quietness. Safe in their seclusion, the Columbian monasteries rose on all sides with great rapidity, and were filled with inmates in extraordinary numbers. Thus the monasteries of St Finian of Clonard, St Comgall of Bangor, could muster three thousand each, and Bede estimates the members of the Welsh Bangor at two thousand one hundred<sup>2</sup>, to say nothing of other smaller institutions. Their labours not only consolidated the efforts of previous missionaries in their own county, but attracted pupils to their schools from every part of Europe, and furnished hosts of missionaries, ready at a moment's warning to go forth, with a zeal which no difficulties could daunt, whithersoever an opening was presented for their labours. For the present we must leave them, and turn to another centre of missionary zeal. But in the course of our narrative we shall often encounter the disciples of Columba again. We shall find them restoring

<sup>1</sup> See an able article on "Scots on the Continent in the Early Middle Ages" in the *Christian Remem-*

*brancer*, April, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, *H. E.* II. 2.

Christianity in Saxon England and Roman Germany, quickening the flame of Christian civilization in Northern France, and reproducing the monasteries of Hy and Lindisfarne at Luxeuil and Bobbio; we shall see them welcomed in the palace of Charlemagne, and we shall come upon their track even in the distant and ungenial Iceland. Thus when Roman civilization had sunk in an abyss of decrepitude, and while as yet the great Teutonic movement was in its infancy, the Providence of Him who is with His Church "even unto the end of the world," raised up men to fill up the gap and to hand on the torch of truth.

CHAP. IV.

A.D. 597.

## CHAPTER V.

### MISSION OF ST AUGUSTINE TO ENGLAND.

A.D. 596—607.

“Pervenit ad nos Anglorum gentem ad fidem Christianam, Deo miserante, desiderantes velie converti, sed sacerdotes e vicinio negligere, et desideria eorum cessare sua adhortatione succendere.”—GREGORII MAGNI *Epist.*

#### CHAP. V

A.D. 596.

*Anglo-Saxon mission.*

WHILE the Celtic Church in Ireland and Scotland was thus consolidating her conquests at home, and preparing for her missionary labours on the continent, efforts were made in a very different quarter to reclaim to Christianity and civilization the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms of England. About twenty years before the death of the great abbot of Iona, a well-known incident had taken place in the forum of Rome. We need not repeat a tale familiar to every child. Who has not heard of the fair-haired Yorkshire boys exposed there for sale by the Jewish slave-merchant, and of the large-hearted monk of the monastery of St Andrew on the Cælian Hill, who, as he passed by, asked their name and country? It was a casual meeting, indeed, but the sight of those children led to events fraught with important consequences to their remote and barbarous home. Barbarous, in truth, it was at this period. Thick darkness had again settled over the island which the arms of Caesar had revealed to his countrymen, and England seemed again to have become a savage nation, shut out from the rest of the world. The traces, indeed, of the Roman conqueror still remained in the great works, the

roads, the bridges, the towns, the baths, the temples, which ever marked the advance of the Iron kingdom; and in the hill-countries of Wales and Cornwall, and the highlands of Scotland, still lingered the disciples of that early British Church whose origin has been variously ascribed to St Peter or St Paul, to St James or Simon Zelotes, to Aristobulus or Joseph of Arimathæa.

CHAP. V.  
A.D. 587.

Hither as to a last resting-place they had fled from the Teutonic invader, who had come from the dark forests of Northern Germany and the shores of the Baltic, where the sound of the Gospel had never yet been heard. Slowly and surely he had made his way; and amidst the long years of implacable hostility between the conquering and the conquered races, it is not surprising that present suffering and perhaps the antipathies of race deterred the British Christian from enlightening the paganism of his invader.

*The Saxon Invasions.*

This work was reserved for the monk of St Andrew, whom we have just now mentioned. He had conceived the idea of undertaking it in person, and had actually accomplished three days' journey towards this distant land, when he was overtaken by the messengers, whom a furious mob had compelled the Pontiff to send and recall him to their city. From that day he was not suffered to return to his monastery. His energy and knowledge of human nature had marked him out as no ordinary man. Entrusted with a political mission to Constantinople, he learnt to reconcile Emperors, and disputed with Eutychius, Bishop of Constantinople. Abbot, ambassador, controversialist, he returned to Rome to be raised by the voice of an enthusiastic people, in a season of pestilence and famine, to the Pontifical chair<sup>1</sup>.

*Gregory the Great.*

*Sep. 3,  
A.D. 590.*

But he had never forgotten that moving sight in the Roman slave-market, or the country of those fair-haired

<sup>1</sup> Milman's *Latin Christianity*, I. 438. Ed. I.

CHAP. V.

A. D. 595.

*Marriage of  
Ethelbert and  
Bertha.*

boys; and five years after his elevation to the Papedom he found an opportunity of carrying out his designs.

In the year 568 Ethelbert, a prince of the house of the Cescings, succeeded to the kingdom of Kent, and before long took up a high position among the princes of the island. The proximity of Kent to the continent had been favourable to the maintenance of the old connection between Britain and Gaul; and about the year 570 Ethelbert married a Christian princess, Bertha, daughter of Charibert, king of Paris. It had been agreed, as a condition of the marriage, that the queen should be allowed to enjoy the free exercise of her religion, and she had been attended to the Kentish court by a French bishop, named Luidhard. It is a proof of Ethelbert's tolerant spirit that he allowed her chaplain to celebrate the worship of the Christian's God in the little church of St Martin, a relic of Roman-British times, outside the walls of Canterbury; and it is only probable that Bertha, who must often have heard what a Clotilda had been able to effect with a Remigius by her side, should have endeavoured, during a union of twenty years, to influence her husband even more strongly in favour of the Gospel. When such were the feelings of the court, it is not surprising that many of the people of Kent, whose own heathen hierarchy had sunk into insignificance, would be anxious to receive some instruction in the religion of their queen. That they made application to the Frankish bishops for missionaries, is a fact we learn from Gregory's letters<sup>1</sup>, and it was, probably, intelligence of this, which determined him in the year 596 to make another attempt to carry out the work which he had been prevented executing in person.

<sup>1</sup> See Greg. *Epp.* vi. 58. "Per-  
venit ad nos Anglorum gentem ad  
fidem Christianam Deo miserante  
*desideranter velle converti*, sed sacer-

dotes e vicinio negligere, et desideria  
eorum cessare sua adhortatione suc-  
cendere." Lappenberg, I. 131. Kem-  
ble's *Saxons in England*, II. 356.



Accordingly he wrote to the presbyter Candidus<sup>1</sup>, administrator of the patrimony of St Peter in Gaul, directing him to buy up English youths of seventeen or twenty years of age, that they might be trained in different monasteries and become missionaries in their native land; and in the following year he sent forth a band of forty monks from his own monastery on the Cælian hill, headed by their Prior Augustine, to commence a direct mission in England.

CHAP. V.

A.D. 596.

*Letter to Candidus.*

In the summer, therefore, of 596, Augustine and his companions set out, and crossing the Gallic Alps, reached the neighbourhood of Aix in Provence. Here, like John Mark, when confronted with the "perils of robbers" and "perils of rivers" in the interior of Asia Minor, the little band began to repent of their enterprise, and to sigh for the security of their cells on the Cælian hill. The accounts they received of the savage character of the Saxons filled them with alarm, and they prevailed on Augustine, who had been already marked out as the bishop of the future English Church, to return to Rome, and obtain for himself and his companions a release from their arduous task<sup>2</sup>.

*Mission of Augustine.*

But Augustine had to deal with a man who lived up to the stern rule of the Benedictine order, who had learnt to crush all human weakness, and to recognise no call but that of duty. He was forthwith sent back with the often-quoted letter to "the timid servants of the Lord," wherein they were urged to accomplish what by God's help they had undertaken, to suffer neither the toils of the journey nor the tongues of evil-speaking men to deter them, but to remember that the more arduous the labour, the greater would be the eternal reward.

Thus urged by an authority they could not resist,

*Landing of the Missionaries.*

<sup>1</sup> See Greg. Epp. vi. 7. Lingard's *Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, i. 23. "Nec mora, Au-

gustinum, quem eis episcopum ordinandum si ab Anglis susciperentur disposuerat, domum remittunt."

## CHAP. V.

A.D. 597.

after the lapse of a year, the missionaries slowly bent their steps from Aix to Arles, from Arles to Vienne, thence to Tours, and so through Anjou to the sea-coast. Then, having provided themselves with interpreters from amongst the Franks, they set sail and landed at Ebbe's Fleet, in the Isle of Thanet. Once safe on what was then a real island, they sent messengers to Ethelbert to announce that they had come from Rome, that they were the bearers of joyful tidings, and could promise him glory in heaven, and a never-ending kingdom with the living and true God.

*Conduct of  
Ethelbert.*

The king, as we have seen, must often have heard of the doctrines of Christianity from his queen and her chaplain<sup>1</sup>, and his predisposition towards the new religion had, in some measure, induced Gregory to send the missionaries who had just landed. But he still hesitated; and with characteristic caution, while he announced his readiness to receive them, he begged they would for the present remain on the other side of the Stour, and would abstain from entering Canterbury, and stipulated further that their first interview should not take place under a roof, but in the open air, for fear of the magical arts, the charms and spells he fancied they might exercise upon him.

*Conference with  
the King.*

Accordingly the Saxon king repaired to the island, and there under an ancient oak awaited the coming of the strange preacher from the famous city of the West. To make a deeper impression on the monarch's mind, Augustine, following probably the example of his master, Gregory, advanced in solemn procession, preceded by a verger carrying a silver cross; then followed one bearing aloft on a board, painted and gilded, a representation of the Saviour. Then came the rest of the brethren, and the choir headed by Laurence and the deacon Peter, who chanted a solemn Litany for their own, as also for the eternal welfare of the people amongst whom they had come. Arrived in the

<sup>1</sup> From Pagi, in Baron. x. 619, we gather that Luidhard was now dead.

king's presence, the latter bade them seat themselves on the ground<sup>1</sup>; he himself could not understand Latin, and Augustine could not speak Anglo-Saxon; so the Frankish priests interpreted, while the missionary explained the meaning of the picture which was borne aloft, and told the king how the merciful One there depicted had left His throne in heaven, died for the sins of a guilty world, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

Ethelbert listened attentively, and then, in a manner at once politic and courteous, replied that the promises of the strangers were fair, but the tidings they announced new and full of a meaning he did not understand. He promised them kindness and hospitality, and liberty to celebrate their services, and undertook that none of his subjects, who might be so disposed, should be prohibited from espousing their religion. Thus successful beyond their most sanguine expectations, Augustine and his companions again formed a procession, and crossing the ferry to Richborough, advanced to the rude wooden city of Canterbury, then "embosomed in thickets," chanting as they went along one of the solemn Litanies which they had learnt from Gregory, and took up their abode in the "Stable-gate<sup>2</sup>," till the king should finally make up his mind.

It is a natural wish that further details had come down to us of this memorable interview, and of the way in which the missionary preached "the word of Life" to the royal worshipper of Odin and Thor<sup>3</sup>. If we may believe a tradition recorded by Ælfric, and expanded by Gocelin, Augustine, taking his text from the picture that was borne aloft, proclaimed "The One true God by whom are all

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A.D. 597.

*His reply.**Preaching of Augustine.*

<sup>1</sup> "Residentibus eis jussu regis, Augustinus primus ore intonat evangelico." Gocelin. Migne, *Patr. Lat.* VII. 61.

<sup>2</sup> "In ea urbis parte quæ *Stable-gate* dicta est, ut W. Thorn tradit,"

Smith's note in Bede, I. 25. Stanley's *Memorials of Canterbury*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> "Verbum ei Vitæ prædicarent" is the very general expression of Bede. Bede, I. 25.

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A.D. 597.

things, and the Almighty Son of the Father, who so loved his creatures that, without ceasing to be God, He stooped to become man, and by his death had given to men the power to become the sons of God." He told them next of such events in His wondrous life on earth as were likely to impress his hearers, how at His birth a star appeared in the East, how He walked upon the sea, how at His death the sun withdrew his shining, how at His Resurrection the earth trembled and the rocks were rent. How having been looked for as the Great Deliverer from the beginning of the world, and having sealed His mission as Divine, He ascended up on high, and was now worshipped by all the world as the One Saviour of mankind<sup>1</sup>.

Whatever was the precise form in which the message of the Gospel was proclaimed to the king, it was not belied by the lives of the missionaries. They gave themselves up, Bede tells us, to prayer and fasting; recommended the word by their own self-devotion and pure and chaste living. This won for them greater acceptance, and they were now allowed to worship with the queen in the church of St Martin, and devoted themselves to the work with renewed zeal. At last the king avowed himself a Christian, and to the great joy, we cannot doubt, of Bertha, was baptized, in all probability at St Martin's church<sup>2</sup>, on the 2nd of June, being the Feast of Whitsunday, in the year A.D. 597.

*Baptism of  
Elthebert.**Baptism of  
the people.*

The conversion of a king was, as we have already, and as we shall see again and again, in these days the signal for the baptism of the nation also. Accordingly, at the next assembly of the Witan<sup>3</sup> the matter was formally referred to the authorities of the kingdom, and they decided in favour of the missionaries. In a letter of Gregory<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Augustini*, Migne, *Patrologia*, Sæc. vii. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Stanley, p. 21, and note.

<sup>3</sup> Kemble's *Saxons in England*,

ii. 205.

<sup>4</sup> *Épp. Lib. viii. 30.* Ed. Ben. Jaffé's *Regest. Pont. Rom.* p. 125.

to the distant patriarch of Alexandria, we are told that on the 25th of December upwards of ten thousand of the people followed the example of their king, and in the waters of the Swale, as we learn from other sources, sealed their acceptance of the new faith<sup>1</sup>.

Meanwhile Augustine had repaired to Gaul, and, according to the plans of Gregory, received consecration to the episcopal office at the hands of the Archbishop of Arles. On his return he took up his abode in the wooden palace of the king, who retired to Reculver, and this, with an old British<sup>2</sup> or Roman church hard by, became the nucleus of his Cathedral. Now also Laurence and Peter were entrusted with the task of returning to Gregory with an account of the success of their mission. They were to recount to him how the country of the fair-haired slaves he had pitied in the Forum had received the faith, how Augustine himself had been raised to the episcopate, and they were to beg for answers to certain important questions respecting the conduct of the mission, which caused the new bishop no little anxiety<sup>3</sup>. They were principally concerned with the establishment of the revenues of the Church of Canterbury, the provision for the married clergy, and the introduction of rites and ceremonies; advice was also requested as to the punishment which ought to be meted out to robbers of churches, within what degrees marriage might be contracted; whether in case of distance a bishop might be consecrated by a single one of the same order; and other

*Embassy to  
Gregory.*

<sup>1</sup> Stanley's *Memorials of Canterbury*, p. 22 n. "The legend represents the crowd as miraculously delivered from drowning, and the baptism as performed by two and two upon each other, at the command, though not by the act, of Augustine." If the Anglo-Saxons in the Kentish kingdom had intermarried with their British subjects the suddenness of the change of religion would be partially

accounted for. Pearson's *Early and Middle Ages of England*, p. 62 n.

<sup>2</sup> Shrouded in a grove of oaks, Ethelbert had converted it into a temple in which to worship his Saxon gods. This Augustine did not destroy, but dedicated it to St Pancras, thus recalling the monastery on the Caelian hill. Stanley, p. 22. Pauli's *Pictures of Old England*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, I. 27.

CHAP. V.

points respecting ceremonial pollution which it is not necessary to specify.

A.D. 601.

*Gregory's reply.*

The messengers went their way, and executed their commission. After the lapse of four years, Gregory replied at length to the questions which Augustine had submitted to him<sup>1</sup>. As to the revenues of the Church, he directed that, according to the Roman custom, they should be divided into four portions, one of which was to be assigned to the bishop and his household for the purpose of hospitality; another to the clergy; another to the poor; the remainder to the maintenance of the church fabric. But Augustine having been trained in the monastic rule, must live in the society of his clergy, and imitate the custom of the members of the early Church, who called nothing their own, and had everything in common. Clerks not in orders might marry if they were so disposed, and could claim to be maintained. As to the crime of sacrilege, the motive ought to be made the subject of diligent inquiry; if poverty dictated the crime, the culprit might be let off with a light punishment, if it was done from a worse motive, a heavier penalty must be awarded, but care should be taken that in no case the Church made a profit by the fines imposed. As to the differences between the Roman and Gallic liturgies, Augustine was directed, with a moderation beyond that of the age, to select from either, whatever appeared to him "pious, religious, and right," to collect it into a volume, and establish it as the liturgy of the Anglo-Saxon Church, ever remembering as a guiding principle "that things are not to be loved on account of places, but places on account of good things<sup>2</sup>." Marriage with a step-mother could not possibly be allowed, it was distinctly forbidden in Holy Writ, and experience shewed the inexpediency of marriages with first and second cousins. As to the line of conduct

<sup>1</sup> Bede, I. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. "Non enim pro locis res,

sed pro bonis rebus loca amanda sunt." Maskell's *Anc. Liturg.* liii.

the missionary should assume towards the Gallic and British bishops, he was told that it was no part of his duty to interfere with the former, or to rebuke and judge, but, "as a man passing through his neighbour's cornfield, though he might not put in the sickle, yet might pluck and eat a few ears," so if occasion required, Augustine might venture to use the language of gentle admonition. As to the British bishops, they were all entrusted to his brotherly care, "that the unlearned might be instructed, the weak strengthened by persuasion, the perverse corrected by authority."

With the bearer of these directions there came over fresh labourers as a reinforcement to the mission, amongst these were Mellitus, Justus, and Paulinus. They brought ecclesiastical vestments, sacred vessels, some relics of apostles and martyrs, a present of books, including a Bible in two volumes, two Psalters, two copies of the Gospels, expositions of certain Epistles, and some apocryphal lives of apostles and martyrs. They also brought with them the pall of a metropolitan for Augustine himself, which made him independent of the bishops of France, and with it a letter explaining the course which the archbishop was to take in developing his work. London was to be his metropolitan see, and he was to consecrate twelve bishops under him, and whenever Christianity had extended to York, he was to place there also a metropolitan with a like number of suffragans. These instructions for the spiritual conquest of the country were further supplemented by directions respecting the way in which he was to deal with the monuments of heathenism. Gregory had written to Ethelbert, requesting him to destroy the heathen temples in his dominions. But he was not satisfied as to the expediency of such a course, and now, after much consideration, wrote to Augustine, directing him not to destroy the temples, but only the idols that were

*Arrival of fresh missionaries.*

CHAP. V.

A.D. 691.

therein; as to the structures themselves, if well built, they were to be purified with holy water and converted into Christian churches, and hallowed by the presence of relics. The heathen festivals might in a similar way, instead of being rudely abolished, be devoted to Christianity and the celebration of the birthdays of the Saints<sup>1</sup>.

*Conference with  
the British  
Christians,  
A.D. 603.*

The course he was to pursue being thus defined, Augustine was enabled to take further steps for the consolidation of the mission. His first step was to invite the British clergy to a conference at a spot called after him, "Augustine's oak<sup>2</sup>." Prepared to make considerable concessions, he yet felt that three points did not admit of being sacrificed; he proposed that the British Church should conform to the Roman usage in the celebration of Easter, and the rite of baptism<sup>3</sup>, and that they should aid him in evangelizing the Saxons. To settle the point, he proposed that the divine judgment should be appealed to; a blind Saxon was introduced, whom the British Christians were unable to cure; Augustine supplicated the divine aid, which was, we are told, vouchsafed. Convinced, but unwilling to give up their old customs, the vanquished party proposed another meeting. Seven bishops assembled on this occasion, together with Dinoh, abbot of the monastery of Bangor Is-y-Coed, in Flintshire. Before the synod met, they proposed to ask the advice of an aged hermit, whether they ought to concede the traditions of their fathers. "If he be a man of God, follow him," was the oracular reply. "How are we to ascertain this?" they asked. "The Lord saith," was the old man's answer, "'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly:' now if Augustine

<sup>1</sup> Bede, I. 29. The subject is reviewed at greater length in a subsequent chapter.

<sup>2</sup> "*Augustinæ ac, ... in confinio Huiciorum et Occidentalium Saxonum.*" Bede, II. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Either (1) completing it by administering the rite of confirmation (Lingard, *A. S. C.* I. 69), or (2) baptizing with trine immersion, Archdeacon Churton's *Early English Church*, p. 44.



is meek and lowly, be assured that he beareth the yoke of Christ." "And how are we to know this?" they asked again. "If he rises to meet you when ye approach, hear and follow him; but if he despise you, and fails to rise from his place, let him also be despised by you." The synod met, and Augustine remained seated. It was a sign that he had not the spirit of Christ, and no efforts of the archbishop could induce the independent bishops to yield one of his demands. "If he will not so much as rise up to greet us," said his opposers, "how much more will he condemn us if we submit ourselves to him." Thereupon Augustine broke up the conference with an angry threat, that if the British Christians would not accept peace with their brethren, they must look for war with their foes, and if they would not proclaim the way of life to the Anglo-Saxons, they would suffer deadly vengeance at their hands<sup>1</sup>.

CHAP. V.

A.D. 603.

*British Christians.*

Thus unsuccessful in winning over the British clergy to that obedience which Gregory had told him he had a right to demand, Augustine returned to Canterbury. And now, as all Kent had espoused the faith, Justus was consecrated to the see of Rochester, and, at the same time, through the connexion of Ethelbert with the king of Essex, that kingdom was opened to ecclesiastical supervision, and Mellitus was advanced to the bishopric of London<sup>2</sup>. This was the limit of the archbishop's success. It fell, indeed, far short of Gregory's design, but that design had been formed on a very imperfect acquaintance with the true condition of the island, and the relations which subsisted between the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. In the following year Augustine died, having already consecrated Laurence as his successor, and was buried in the Abbey, as yet unfinished, of St Peter and St Paul, outside the city-walls.

A.D. 604.

*Death of Augustine.*

A.D. 605.

<sup>1</sup> Bede, II. 2. Where also he tells the story of the fulfilment of this prediction.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, II. 3. Stanley, p. 28 n.

## CHAP. V.

A.D. 605.

A.D. 616.

*Apostasy of  
Eadbald.*

The new primate not only laboured to spread the faith among the heathen Saxons, but tried, like his predecessor, to win over the Britons and Scots to a conformity as regards the observance of Easter. But he was equally unsuccessful; and in the refusal of Dagan<sup>1</sup>, an Irish bishop, even to eat with the Roman missionaries, he learnt how far a dispute about things indifferent could embitter the professed disciples of a common Lord. But worse things were in store for the infant Church over which he himself presided. On the death of Ethelbert in 616, "it appeared," says Fuller<sup>2</sup>, "as though much of the Kentish Christianity was buried in his grave." His son Eadbald not only refused to walk in the way of his father, and to adopt the Christian faith, but even espoused his father's wife; and, at the same time, the three sons of Sebert, king of Essex, made their father's death the signal for an open denial of the faith he had adopted. The occasion of this outbreak is illustrative of the precarious tenure which the new religion had as yet gained over the Anglo-Saxon mind. One day the three princes saw Mellitus celebrating mass with the wonted solemnities: "Give us," said they, "of that white bread, even as thou wast wont to do to our father, and as thou dost now to the people." "If ye are minded to be baptized with the baptism wherewith your father was baptized," replied the bishop, "ye may also partake of the holy bread whercof he partook; but if ye despise the Laver of Life, ye cannot partake of the Bread of Life." Enraged at his refusal, and protesting that they had no need of such baptism, "if thou hast no mind," said they, "to yield to us in so trifling a matter, thou canst no longer stay in our kingdom," and they drove him forth<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Bede, II. 4. Dagan was abbot of Inverdaoile in the county of Wexford, and was promoted to the episcopacy about A.D. 600. Lani-

gan, II. 365, and notes.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller's *Church History*, I. 175.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, II. 5.

Thus expelled, Mellitus with Justus repaired to Canterbury, and consulted with Laurence on the aspect of affairs. It was agreed that they should retire to France, and await the course of events; and Laurence was on the point of following them, when, in the church of St Peter and St Paul, where he had ordered his bed to be placed<sup>1</sup>, he was solemnly warned in a dream by the prince of the Apostles, not to leave the flock over which he had been appointed overseer; and as a proof of this divine interference, he displayed to Eadbald in the morning his back scarred and lacerated with the stripes which the indignant Apostle had inflicted upon him for his cowardice<sup>2</sup>. Whether superstition or artifice suggested the story, it had the effect of thoroughly affrighting the superstitious son of Bertha. Filled with alarm, he put away his unlawful wife, and his newly adopted gods, recalled Mellitus and Justus, reinstated the latter in his see of Rochester, and would have used all his influence to restore the former to his see of London, but the East Saxons were resolute in their adherence to their native faith, and would not have the bishop to rule over them<sup>3</sup>.

CHAP. V.  
A.D. 616.

While the infant Church was thus struggling even for existence, all hope of its extension was cut off, and it is not till after an interval of eight years, when Justus had succeeded to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, that the Kentish mission was able to advance the faith in the powerful kingdom of Northumbria.

A.D. 624.

Again the same story meets us. A Christian queen and an energetic bishop are once more the chief instruments in bringing about the change of faith. The daughter

*Extension of the  
Mission to  
Northumbria.*

<sup>1</sup> Bede, II. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Lappenberg, I. 143 n.

<sup>3</sup> "Mellitum vero Lundonienses episcopum recipere noluerunt, idolatris magis pontificibus servire gaudentes. Non enim tanta erat ei, quanta patri ipsius regni potestas, ut

etiam nolentibus ac contradicentibus paganis antistitem suæ posset ecclesiæ reddere." Bede, II. 6. "London then, was even London then, as weak in the infancy, as now wayward in the old age thereof." Fuller, I. 178.

## CHAP. V.

A.D. 625.

of Ethelbert married Edwin the king of Northumbria, and in her case, as in that of her mother, the same stipulation was made for the free exercise of her religion<sup>1</sup>. Accompanied by Paulinus, who was ordained a missionary bishop by Justus, Ethelburga travelled to her husband's kingdom, and zealously seconded the efforts of the bishop to win over the pagan Northumbrians, and most of all her husband, to the Christian faith<sup>2</sup>.

*Edwin's early life.*

Edwin's life had been chequered by strange vicissitudes. When only three years old, his inheritance had been seized by his brother-in-law Ethelfrith, and he had been committed to the care of Cadvan, king of Gwynedd, and had been educated by the British clergy till he reached man's estate<sup>3</sup>. Unsuccessful in a battle with Ethelfrith, wherein he had been aided by his guardian, he fled to Mercia, and finding no safety there, had at last taken refuge with Redwald in East Anglia. Twice his unrelenting persecutor demanded that he should be given up to him, or put to death, and twice Redwald refused. A third time the emissaries of Ethelfrith made their demand, and the large sum which accompanied it tempted the Bretwalda to comply, and he promised to surrender his ward.

The next night a faithful friend informed Edwin of the king's design, and offered him a secure retreat. This was declined; and while he was sitting on a stone before the palace, sad and disconsolate, not knowing whither to bend his steps, he was suddenly accosted by a stranger, who not only promised to plead his cause with Redwald, but hinted darkly at his future elevation to the throne, and asked, "If he who has promised such benefits, should impart to you doctrines of life and salvation, better and more efficacious than any of your relatives has ever heard, would you obey

<sup>1</sup> "Neque abnegavit se etiam eandem subitum esse religionem; si tamen examinata a prudentibus sanctior ac Deo dignior posset inve-

niri." Bede, II. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, II. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Lappenberg, I. 145.

him, and listen to his admonitions?" Edwin promised. CHAP. V.  
 The stranger therefore laid his hand on his head, saying, A.D. 625.  
 "When this sign shall be repeated, remember this hour,  
 this discourse, and your promise;" and with these words  
 vanished from his sight<sup>1</sup>.

Followed as this strange occurrence was by a battle on *Restored to his kingdom.*  
 the banks of the Idle, in which Redwald conquered his  
 enemy Ethelfrith, and restored him to his paternal king-  
 dom, it could not fail to make a deep impression on his  
 mind, and was no doubt the theme now of frequent con-  
 versations with his young queen. By her we may be sure  
 it was communicated to Paulinus, who did not fail to make  
 use of it when an opportunity offered.

The year after his marriage, the life of the king was A.D. 626.  
 unsuccessfully attempted by an assassin sent by Cwichelm,  
 king of Wessex. A faithful thane received the blow in-  
 tended for his master, and died in the struggle. It was  
 the first day of Easter. The same night the queen was  
 safely delivered of a daughter, and when Edwin returned  
 thanks for this blessing to his gods in the presence of the  
 bishop, the latter told him that he ought rather to return  
 thanks to the Lord Christ, to whom was due his own pre-  
 servation as well as the blessing of a child. "If your God,"  
 replied Edwin, overjoyed, "will give me victory over this  
 king of Wessex, I will renounce my idols and worship  
 him;" and as a pledge of his sincerity, he entrusted his  
 daughter to Paulinus, by whom she was baptized on the  
 Whitsunday following, with eleven others of the king's  
 household<sup>2</sup>.

Before long, Edwin's wound was healed, and collecting  
 an army he marched against the king of Wessex, and  
 gained the day, all those who had conspired against him  
 being either slain or taken prisoners. Though he had  
 thus been successful, he did not immediately fulfil his pro-

<sup>1</sup> See Bede, II. 12. Lappenberg, I. 148 n.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, II. 9.

CHAP. V.

A.D. 626.

mise. He ceased, indeed, to worship idols, but hung back from an open acceptance of Christianity. He held frequent conversations with the bishop respecting the nature of the new faith, and with his chiefs respecting the course he ought to pursue<sup>1</sup>. While he was thus hesitating, there came letters and presents for himself and his queen from Rome, where Boniface the Fifth took a deep interest in the progress of the Anglo-Saxon mission. But still Edwin did not make up his mind, and deferred a positive decision. At this juncture Paulinus, who had been long watching him, determined to take advantage of the romantic adventure of his youth, which he had no doubt learnt from the queen. Approaching him one day, he laid his right hand upon his head, and asked him if he did not remember the sign. Edwin trembled<sup>2</sup>, and in reply to the bishop's exhortations promised to submit the question of the new faith to the decision of his council. The Witan was accordingly assembled, and each thane was asked his opinion. The first to reply to the solemn question which religion ought to be adopted, was Coifi, the chief priest. No one, he declared, had applied to the worship of the gods of their fathers with greater zeal and fidelity than himself, but in no respect had he been the gainer; his religion had won for him neither temporal prosperity, nor the sunshine of royal favour<sup>3</sup>. He was ready, therefore, for his part, to give up such ungrateful gods, and to try whether the God whom Paulinus preached could not reward him better.

*Coifi's speech.*

Among the nobles, however, there was one, less bent on measuring the value of a religion by its temporal advantages. He struck a deeper chord, and suggested a truer

<sup>1</sup> In Bede's graphic words, "et ipse cum esset vir natura sagacissimus, saepe diu solus residens, ac quidem tacito, sed in intimis cordis multa secum conloquens, quid sibi esset faciendum, quæ religio servanda tractabat." Bede, II. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, II. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, II. 13. "Et nihilominus multi sunt qui ampliora a te beneficia quam ego, et majores accipiunt dignitates, magisque prosperantur in omnibus quæ agenda vel acquirenda disponunt."

reason why the advocates of the new doctrine should be consulted. "The present life of man, O King," said he, "may be likened to what often happens when thou art sitting at supper with thy thanes and nobles in winter-time; a fire blazes on the hearth, and warms the chamber; outside rages a storm of wind and snow; a sparrow flies in at one door of thy hall, and quickly passes out at the other. For a moment, while it is within, it is unharmed by the wintry blast, but this brief period of happiness over, to the wintry blast whence it came it returns, and vanishes from thy sight. Such is the brief life of man; we know not what went before it, and we are utterly ignorant as to what shall follow it. If, therefore, this new doctrine contain anything more certain, it justly deserves to be followed."

CHAP. V.

A.D. 627.

*The thane's parable.*

The speaker expressed the feelings of many in the council, and, at the suggestion of the high-priest, Paulinus was introduced, that he might explain more fully the faith he sought to establish. His address has not been preserved, but when it was ended, the high-priest broke out again, "Long since had I known that what we have been wont to worship is nothing, and the more diligently I sought after truth therein, the less I found it. Now, however, I openly confess that in the doctrines we have listened to, such truth is clear and manifest as can confer on us life, salvation, and eternal happiness. I advise, therefore, O king, that we instantly abjure, and set on fire those temples where we have so long worshipped in vain, and without reaping any advantage."

The zeal of the new convert powerfully affected the king, and he professed his readiness to adopt the new faith. But who would dare to profane the idol temples and altars still standing, and still regarded with superstitious awe? The high-priest declared his readiness to undertake this dangerous duty, and thus prove his sincerity in the most

*Zeal of Conf.*

CHAP. V.  
A. D. 627.

signal manner. The chief temple of the Northumbrian kingdom was in the town of Godmundingham, near Market Weighton, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Here, if any where, Odin and Thor ought to vindicate their insulted majesty, and prove their power and might. Hither then the high-priest declared he was ready to proceed, remarking that it became none more than himself to destroy what, now, through the wisdom given him by the true God, he knew he had worshipped foolishly. He therefore requested the king to lend him his armour and war-horse, that thus accoutred he might proceed to the destruction of the idol. The multitude thought that Coifi, who, as chief-priest, was forbidden by the laws to carry arms, or to ride anything but a mare, was mad. But he, undeterred, with the king's sword girded on his thigh, mounted the charger, and led the way. Arrived on the spot, he flung a javelin at the temple, and fixed it fast in the wall, and then, with much joy at this proof of the impotency of the old deities, he bade his retinue destroy the heathen structure, and burn it with all its sacred precincts.

*Baptism of  
Eadwina.*

When the high-priest of the old faith thus polluted and destroyed the very altars he had himself dedicated, the king could no longer "halt between two opinions." While he was instructed<sup>1</sup> and prepared for the holy rite, a wooden church was quickly built, and there he himself, with many of his family and nobles, was baptized on the 12th of April, 627.

<sup>1</sup> "In ecclesia sancti Petri Apostoli, quam ibidem ipse de ligno cum catechizaretur atque ad percipien-

dum baptismum imbueretur, citato opere construxit." Bede, II. 14.



## CHAPTER VI.

### PROGRESS OF MISSIONARY WORK IN ENGLAND.

A.D. 627—689.

“Per hos sanctissimos viros Episcopos Aidanum, Finanum, Colmannum, sive per se, sive per alios quos ipsi consecratos Anglis dederant Episcopos et sacerdotes, regna quatuor, duo Northumbrorum, Merciorum, Midilanglorum, et media pars regni Saxonum Orientalium usque Thamesis pæne ripam ad Christi conversa sunt.”—FORDUN, *Scoti-Chron.*

THUS, at last, the Kentish missionaries reaped the fruit of their labours. Accompanied by the zealous Paulinus, the newly-baptized king travelled from town to town throughout his dominions, and aided by all the weight of his influence the propagation of the faith. Arrived at any convenient spot, it was the custom of the bishop to set up a cross; by his side would stand the king, and the deacon Jacob; one of the chants that Gregory had taught his monks on the Cælian Hill was then begun, and by its sweet and novel tones attracted a crowd prepared to hear the bishop when he began to speak. The labours of Paulinus were crowned with ample success; at Yeverin in Glendale, at Catterick on the Swale, at Donafeld near Doncaster, he baptized many converts. At the first of the above-mentioned places he was incessantly occupied for six-and-thirty consecutive days, from early morn until night-fall, in instructing the people, and when they were duly prepared, in baptizing them by immersion in the little river Glen. Crossing the Humber he accompanied the king and queen as far as Southwell in Nottinghamshire,

CHAP. VI.

A. D. 627.

*Northumbrian mission.*

*Success of Paulinus.*

CHAP. VI.

A.D. 627.

*Conversion of  
East Anglia.*

A.D. 630.

and baptized great numbers of converts in the river Trent; and there were those in Bede's time who had seen and conversed with some that had received baptism from this energetic bishop, and who remembered how he was a man tall of stature, a little stooping, with dark hair, meagre visage, aquiline nose, and a venerable and majestic aspect<sup>1</sup>. Not satisfied with the care of his own subjects, Edwin next extended his religious zeal to the kingdom of the East Angles, where he had spent so many unhappy years. Redwald the father of the reigning king Eorpwald had declared himself a convert to Christianity, during a visit to the court of Ethelbert, king of Kent. But on his return, importuned by his wife and friends, he had, to satisfy both parties, erected an altar to Christ and to his heathen gods, in one and the same temple. But Edwin succeeded in thoroughly converting Eorpwald, who, however, was before long murdered by a pagan assassin. East Anglia was now plunged into strife and discord, but the good king of Northumbria lived long enough to hear of the restoration of Christianity, after a lapse of three years. In the year 630 Sigebert, who had been baptized while an exile in Gaul, took possession of the throne conjointly with his brother Eegrie, and he was powerfully assisted in his efforts to evangelize his subjects by Felix, a Burgundian bishop, whom Honorius, the archbishop of Canterbury, sent to labour in East Anglia. He went about the province preaching, baptizing, and erecting schools on the plan of those existing in Gaul, and on the foundation of the see of Dunwich, was appointed the first bishop<sup>2</sup>. To this same kingdom came also Fursæus, a monk from

<sup>1</sup> Bede, II. 16.

<sup>2</sup> "Instituit scholam in qua pueri literis erudirentur; juvante se episcopo Felice quem de Cantia acceperat, eisque pedagogos ac magistros juxta morem Cantuariorum præ-

bente." Bede, II. 15; III. 18. "Scholas opportunis locis instituens, barbariem gentis sensim comitate Latina informabat." Malmes. *de Gestis Pont.* II. Lappenberg, I. 154 n.

Ireland, who was heartily welcomed by Sigebert, and by his life and doctrine contributed much to the spread of the Gospel<sup>1</sup>. His missionary tours, which extended over a period of fifteen years, were productive of immense benefits, alike to the heathen and the Christians of East Anglia, and Bede has drawn a glowing picture of his sanctity and zeal.

CHAP. VI.  
A. D. 633.

In the kingdom, however, of Northumbria, a sad change was at hand. Before Edwin could receive the letters addressed to him by the Pope Honorius I., informing him that he had sent palls to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, he had perished in the battle of Hatfield fighting against the savage Penda, who, at the head of a formidable British confederacy, invaded Northumbria, spreading everywhere ruin and desolation, and sparing neither age nor sex. Paulinus, who must have perceived that the times were ripe neither for such a government as that of Edwin, or such a religion as he had introduced, fled with the widowed queen and her children into Kent, and received from the Archbishop of Canterbury the vacant see of Rochester.

*Decline of the Northumbrian Mission.*

The only member of the mission left in York was Jacob the deacon, who must have grieved sorely for the dark and troublous times which had now set in for Northumbria. Both Eanfrith prince of Bernicia and Osric prince of Deira relapsed into heathenism, and the land groaned under the savage rule of Cædwalla<sup>2</sup>. At length, in 635, Oswald a younger son of Æthelfrith, raising a small force, and erecting a cross, round which he commanded his followers to kneel and pray for aid to the God of battles,

A. D. 635.  
*Accession of Oswald.*

<sup>1</sup> On the Milesian Scot, Fursæus, who in his cell at Burgh Castle "kindled the spark which, transmitted to the inharmonious Dante of a barbarous age, occasioned the first of the metrical compositions

from whose combination the *Divina Commedia* rose," see Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, I. 164. Lani-  
gan, II. 448—460.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, III. I. Lappenberg, I. 157.

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A. D. 635.

burst upon the armies of Cædwalla at Hefenfeld near Hexham, and utterly routed the last hero of the old British race. Uniting in himself the sovereignty of Bernicia and Deira he was saluted as the sixth Bretwalda, and under him the land had rest many days<sup>1</sup>.

*Missionaries  
from Ioud.*

Like Edwin he had in his earlier years been an exile, and had received instruction from the Scottish missionaries; and now that he had obtained the throne he was determined to do all in his power to carry on the good work which Paulinus had begun, but which had been interrupted by the invasion of Penda. Instead, however, of sending to Canterbury for labourers in the mission-field, he sent messengers to Segienus, Abbot of Hy, requesting aid in the instruction of his subjects. In compliance with his wish, the Abbot sent him a monk named Corman<sup>2</sup>, who, after preaching the word some time with little success, returned in disgust to his seagirt home. He could effect nothing, he declared, to the assembled brethren, owing to the ungovernable and barbarous temper of the Saxons. These tidings were received with sorrow, and the assembly was in anxious discussion as to the best course to be taken, when a voice was heard saying, "It seems to me, brother, thou hast been harsher than was fitting towards thy ignorant hearers, and thou hast not, in accordance with Apostolic usage, first offered them the milk of simple teaching, till by degrees being nourished with the divine word, they might be enabled to receive the more perfect and to keep the higher precepts of God."

*Aidan.*

Thereupon the eyes of all were fixed upon the speaker, and it was unanimously agreed that no other was more fit to undertake the duty of evangelizing these wild Northumbrians. This was Aidan<sup>3</sup>, a monk of Iona, of whom,

<sup>1</sup> Lappenberg, I. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, III. 5. Hect. Boethius, Lib. IX.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, III. 5. In the *Chronicon Hyense*, drawn up by Dr Reeves, principally from the Irish Annals,

though a disciple of the Irish school, even Bede speaks in the highest terms, as a man eminent for meekness, piety, and good works. Having been consecrated bishop, he immediately set out for Northumbria, and fixed his see at Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, which the king willingly granted him, to be an English Iona. Hence he went forth on his missionary tours, wherein he was always assisted by Oswald, who, while as yet the bishop was not master of the English language, himself acted as interpreter, and made his instruction intelligible to his chiefs and courtiers. Nor did Aidan fail to justify the confidence that had been reposed in him. Active in the propagation of the faith, he was at once severe towards himself and humble and beneficent towards the poor and lowly. "He neither sought the things of this life nor cared for them. Whatever presents he received from the king or wealthy persons, he rejoiced to distribute forthwith among the poor that fell in his way. In his journeys through his diocese, he was wont to travel not on horseback, but on foot, except in case of great necessity, in order that, as he went along, he might address those whom he happened to meet, whether rich or poor, and exhort them, if not already Christians, to embrace the faith, and if Christians, to shew forth their faith by almsgiving and good works<sup>1</sup>." Like the founder of Icolmkill, he was devoted to reading, and the study of the Scriptures; and of all that accompanied him, he exacted the same diligence, requiring that they must learn the Psalms, or read the Bible, wherever they might be, and as a daily duty. If, as very rarely occurred, he was invited to the king's table, one or two only of his clergy accompanied him, and after a slight refreshment, he hurried

*Aidan's Missionary labours.*

we find sub ann. 635, "Ab insula Hii ad provinciam Anglorum instituendam in Christo missus est Ædan, accepto gradu episcopatus." He was the son of Lugair, son of Ernin,

and of the same lineage as St Brigid and other distinguished saints. See Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 374. *Lanigan*, II. 417.

<sup>1</sup> Bede, III. 5.

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back with all speed to study and devotion. He set the example adopted by religious persons of both sexes, of fasting until three in the afternoon every Wednesday and Friday in the year, except between Easter and Whitsunday. Towards the poor he bore himself with humility, towards the rich with faithfulness, neither cringing nor flattering. Whatever money he received from them, he expended either in works of charity or in redeeming slaves, many of whom he trained and educated, and even raised to the priesthood.

*Foundation of  
the Monastery  
of Lindisfarne.*

To Lindisfarne, where, according to the Irish custom, Aidan had founded a monastery, and united<sup>1</sup> the monastic duties with those of the bishop, flocked numbers of auxiliaries, chiefly monks from Iona, who with great zeal preached the word throughout Northumbria. Churches were built in divers places, and monasteries were endowed with grants of land, where the Saxon youth were instructed by their Celtic teachers<sup>2</sup>.

*Conversion of  
Wessex.*

Nor was it only in Northumbria that the effect of this mission from Iona was felt. In the same year that Aidan came to Lindisfarne, Oswald repaired to the court of Cynegils, king of Wessex, to ask the hand of his daughter in marriage. A year before, Cynegils had been visited by Birinus, who is said to have been bred up as a monk in the monastery of Gregory at Rome, and who had undertaken by the advice of Pope Honorius<sup>3</sup> to penetrate into the innermost parts of the country for the purpose of propagating the Christian faith. Raised to the episcopate

<sup>1</sup> Bede, *Vita S. Cuthberti*, c. 16. "Aidan quippe, qui primus ejusdem loci episcopus fuit, monachus erat et monachicam cum suis omnibus vitam semper agere solebat." Cf. also Bede, III. 3.

<sup>2</sup> "Exin cœpere plures per dies de Scottorum regione venire Britanniam atque illis Anglorum provinciis quibus regnavit Oswald, magna devotione verbum fidei prædicare, et

credentibus gratiam baptismi quicunque sacerdotali erant gradu præditi, ministrare... Construebantur ecclesiæ... donabantur munere regio possessiones, et territoria ad instituenda monasteria." Bede, III. 3.

<sup>3</sup> "Promittens quidem se (Honorio) præsentem in intimis ultra Anglorum partibus quo nullus doctor præcessisset, sanctæ fidei semina esse sparsurum." Bede, III. 7.

by Asterius, bishop of Genoa, at the command of Honorius he had come to the island, and finding himself on his landing surrounded by the darkest paganism, he had determined to remain where he was rather than advance further. His preaching had now so far influenced the king, that he had consented to submit to baptism, and, on stepping forth from the font, was received by Oswald, who gladly became at once his godfather and son-in-law.

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By the two kings Dorchester was assigned to Birinus as an episcopal see, and here he continued for some time preaching the word, building churches, and gathering many into the Christian fold. On the death of Cynegils, in 643, his son Cenwealh refused baptism, put away his wife, who was the sister of Penda, and contracted another alliance. War ensued, and he was driven from his kingdom. For three years he lived in exile at the court of Anna the pious king of East Anglia, and there learnt to adopt the Christian faith. On his restoration to his kingdom, he was visited by a certain priest named Agilbert, who was of French extraction, but had been spending some time in Ireland for the sake of studying the Scriptures. He was invited by the king to stay and accept the bishopric, and complied with his request. But at last Cenwealh, who knew nothing but Saxon<sup>1</sup>, growing weary of the bishop's foreign dialect, secretly introduced into the new see of Winchester an Anglo-Saxon, who could speak his own language, named Wini, who also had been ordained in France. This, and the division of his diocese, grievously offended Agilbert, and straightway leaving the country, he accepted the bishopric of Paris, where he lived to a good old age.

*Birinus, bishop of Dorchester.*

A.D. 643.

A.D. 649.

Meanwhile the good Oswald, whose amiable character had won for him even among his foes, the Britons, the

*Death of Oswald.*

<sup>1</sup> "Tandem rex, qui Saxonum tantum linguam noverat, *peritus barbaræ loquæ*, subintroducitur in provinciam alium *sue lingue* episcopum vocabulo Wini, et ipsum in Gallia ordinatum." Bede, III. 7.

surname of "Lamngwin," "*the fair or free of hand*," had perished in battle against his restless foe the savage Penda, who, with pagan ferocity, ordered his head and arms to be severed from the trunk and fixed upon poles. On his death a division of the kingdom took place. Oswiu became king of Bernicia, and, after a lapse of two years, Oswin, son of Osric, of Deira. But the reign of the latter was brief, and he was murdered by the command of Oswiu. The new king strove to live on peaceable terms with the champion of paganism, the terrible Penda, and thinking thereby to strengthen his cause, accepted for his son the hand of Penda's daughter, and gave his own daughter to Peada, the son of the great chief, and ealdorman of the Middle Angles. This prince did not refuse to comply with the conditions which his father-in-law annexed to their union, and together with all his thanes and followers was baptized by Finan, the successor of Aidan in the see of Lindisfarne. After receiving the rite, Peada returned into Mercia with four missionaries to evangelize the Mercian people. These were Cedd, Adda, Betti, and Diuma<sup>1</sup>; they preached the word with much success, and many both high and low renounced their idolatry, and were received into the Church. Even Penda did not oppose their work. He had no objection, he said, to their preaching, he only hated and despised those who professed the faith of Christ without his works, and thought they were miserable creatures who were above obeying the God in whom they professed to believe<sup>2</sup>.

His own devotion to the "God of Battles" was at least sincere. Though his son had married the daughter of Oswiu, he still continued his inroads into the Northumbrian territory, till at last the king gave him one of his

<sup>1</sup> An Irishman, see Lanigan, II. 428.

<sup>2</sup> "Quin potius odio habebat, et despiciebat eos, quos fide Christi imbutos, opera fidei non habere depre-

hendit, dicens contemnendos esse eos et miseros qui Deo suo in quem crederent obedire contemnerent." Bede, III. 21.



sons as a hostage, and promised innumerable royal ornaments and other presents, if he would only withdraw his devastating bands. But all was in vain. The old pagan king summoned his allies, the king of East Anglia, the king of Deira, and the king of Gwynedd, and marched against him, determined to gain the sovereignty of the whole island. Oswiu on his side prepared for the battle, and bade his little band put their trust in Christ. "Since the heathen," he cried, "refuses to receive our presents, let us offer them to Him who will, the Lord our God<sup>1</sup>," and he vowed, if victorious, to give twelve estates for the erection of monasteries, and to devote his daughter to perpetual virginity and a cloister life. The battle began, and terminated in the complete rout of the pagans. The king of East Anglia, Penda himself, and nearly all his thirty auxiliary chiefs, were slain. The king of Gwynedd escaped under the veil of night, and the swollen stream of the Aire<sup>2</sup> swept away multitudes of the rest. Oswiu fulfilled his vows. His daughter was devoted to perpetual celibacy, twelve estates were given up to the foundation of monasteries, and the new faith was firmly established in Mercia. Diuma, one of the missionaries who had accompanied Peada from Oswiu's court, was consecrated by Finan, the first bishop of the Middle Angles and the Mercians, the paucity of ecclesiastics making it necessary to place the two people under a single bishop. Diuma laboured with success, but dying before long at Reppington was succeeded by Ceollach, who also was an Irish-Scot<sup>3</sup>. He likewise held the see for but a brief period, and retired to the monastery of Iona, leaving in his place an Anglo-Saxon named<sup>4</sup> Trum-

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A.D. 655.

*Defeat of Penda  
at Winwéd field.*

<sup>1</sup> "Si paganus nescit accipere nostra donaria offeramus ei qui novit, Domino Deo nostro." Bede, III. 24.

<sup>2</sup> At Winwéd field near Leeds.

<sup>3</sup> Or Cellach, a Scot or Irishman

from Hy. Bede, III. 21, 24. Lanigan, II. 428, Reeves' *Chronicon Hyense*, p. 375.

<sup>4</sup> He had been instructed and ordained by the Irish. Bede, III. 21.

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here, who was a monk, but ordained bishop by the Irish-Scots.

A.D. 655.

*Conversion of Essex.*

Essex also felt the influence of Oswiu's supremacy. Its king Sigebert was a friend of the king of Northumbria, and made frequent visits to his kingdom. During these the subject of the new faith was often discussed between them, and at length, moved by the earnest remonstrances of his friend, Sigebert abjured idolatry, was baptized by Finan, together with a number of his courtiers, and returned to Essex with Cedd, who was, after proof of successful labour, consecrated by Finan, bishop of the East Saxons<sup>1</sup>. Not many years before, on the death of Paulinus, Ithamar, an Anglo-Saxon of the province of Canterbury, was consecrated by Honorius bishop of Rochester, the first example of an Anglo-Saxon being raised to the episcopate; the same archbishop also nominated Thomas, from the province of the Gyrwas, to the bishopric of Dunwich, on the death of Felix, and on his own death, in 653, he was, after an interval of a year and six months, succeeded by an Anglo-Saxon, Deusdedit, of Wessex, who received his consecration at the hands of the Kentish bishop Ithamar, and lived to consecrate Damianus, a south Saxon, to the see of Rochester<sup>2</sup>.

A.D. 664.

This rapid growth of a native episcopate was a sign that the first stage in the missionary work was reached, and that a national English Church would be formed before long. As yet, however, there was one considerable obstacle to complete union between the different dioceses. Two rival bands had hitherto been employed in the evangelization of England; the Roman, assisted by their

<sup>1</sup> "Ubi eum omnia perambulantem multam Domino ecclesiam congregasset, ... contigit redire domum ac pervenire ad ecclesiam Lindisfaronensem, propter colloquium Finiani episcopi; qui ubi prosperatum

*ei opus evangelii comperit, fecit eum episcopum in gentem orientalium Saxonum, vocatis ad se in ministerium ordinationis aliis duobus episcopis."* Bede, III. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, III. 20.

converts and some teachers from France, and the Irish, who were plainly the larger body. Between the two there were the old differences respecting the time of keeping Easter, on which point, we have seen how an Irish bishop felt so keenly, as to refuse all communion with his brethren, who followed the Roman custom<sup>1</sup>. There was also a difference respecting the form of the clerical tonsure; the missionaries from Iona shaved the fore part of the head in the shape of a crescent<sup>2</sup>, those from Rome shaved the crown of the head, which was surrounded by a circle of hair, supposed to represent the Saviour's crown of thorns. It is true that these differences affected externals only; but amongst a people only just weaned from idolatry, and as yet acquainted with little more than the externals of Christianity, such differences were fraught with much danger. They penetrated the palaces of the different kings, and produced no doubt considerable misunderstanding. Thus, while Oswiu was celebrating Easter, according to the custom he had learnt at Iona, his queen Eanfleda, a daughter of Edwin, who had spent her youth at the Kentish court, was still practicing the austerities of Lent. Again, his son and co-regent Ealhfrith, being influenced by Wilfrid, a priest of Northumbrian birth, strongly favoured the Roman party, and even expelled some Scotch monks from the monastery of Ripon, to make way for others of the party of his friend. It was plain that the scandal could not be allowed to continue, and it was arranged that an amicable conference on the points in dispute should be held at Whitby, in a monastery presided over by the abbess Hilda.

Accordingly, Oswiu and his son repaired to the appointed place, and met the representatives of both parties.

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A.D. 664.

*Conflict between the Irish and Roman Missionaries.*

*Synod of Streoneshalch or Whitby.*

<sup>1</sup> Bp. Dagan. See above p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> "The tonsure of the *secundus ordo* was *ab aure ad aurem*, the anterior half of the head being made bare, but the occiput left untouched.

This usage existed in St Patrick's time, who may have found it in the country; it was adopted by St Columba, and continued in his order until 718." Reeves' *Adamnan*, 350.

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A.D. 664.

*Wilfrid.*

On the side of the missionaries from Iona appeared Colman, who had succeeded Finan in the bishopric of Lindisfarne, Cedd bishop of Wessex, and the abbess Hilda herself. On the other side were Agilbert, who, as we have seen, had been promoted to the see of Dorchester, accompanied by a priest Agatho, Jacob, the deacon of Paulinus, Romanus, a Kentish priest belonging to the queen's household, and last, not least, Wilfrid, the friend of the king's son and co-regent. The future bishop of York was a Northumbrian, of noble birth; in his thirteenth year he had resolved to renounce the world, and through the influence of Oswiu's queen had been received into the monastery of Lindisfarne. There he had distinguished himself by his humility, devotion, and mental endowments, and above all by an earnest longing to behold and pray in the Church of the Apostle Peter at Rome. The first of the many converted Anglo-Saxons over whom at this period the mystic city on the Tiber exercised a strange fascination, he found an eager promoter of his wishes in the queen Eanfleda, who sent him to her brother the king of Kent. At his court the ardent Northumbrian became acquainted with the doctrines of the Roman Church, and hence in company with the eminent Benedict Biscop he embarked for the Continent. Arrived at Lyons, he so won the favour of the archbishop Delphinus that he might have married his brother's daughter, and occupied a high position in France. But he was bound for Rome, and nothing could turn him from his purpose. In the holy city, whither he was to be followed by many of his fellow-countrymen, he employed himself diligently in mastering the rules of ecclesiastical discipline, the Roman computation of Easter, and other points proper to be known by a priest of that Church. Returning thence a devoted adherent of the Roman see, he stayed three years at Lyons, and received the Roman tonsure from the archbishop.

Thence, having with difficulty escaped death<sup>1</sup> in the persecution which broke out against his episcopal friend, he hastened back to his own country, and, as we have seen, had acquired great influence over Oswiu's son, now the co-regent, who had made him abbot of his new monastery at Ripon.

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A.D. 664.

The conference at Whitby began with an exhortation from Oswiu to peace and concord, and a determination to discover and follow the true tradition on the Pascal question. Colman having been requested to deliver his opinion, appealed to the tradition handed down from St John as the authority for the custom the king had learnt at Iona. Agilbert followed, and requested that Wilfrid, who could speak the Anglo-Saxon language, might be allowed to deliver their common sentiments. The latter then detailed how he had seen the festival of Easter celebrated at Rome, "where the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried," and throughout Gaul and Italy where he had himself travelled. The same custom he declared obtained throughout Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, indeed the whole world, save and except only that obscure corner where dwelt the Picts and Scots. The controversy now waxed warm, and was carried on on both sides with skill and acuteness. How it would have ended it is impossible to say, had not Wilfrid adduced in support of the Roman customs the often quoted words of the Lord, "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Thereupon the king turned to Colman<sup>2</sup>, and inquired whether these words were really

*Arguments of  
Wilfrid in the  
Council.*

<sup>1</sup> "At vero cum sanctus Wilfridus spoliatus, et pariter ad palmam martyrii intrepidus staret; Duces interrogaverunt dicentes: 'Quis est iste juvenis formosus, qui se præparat ad mortem?' Dictumque est illis:

'Transmarinus de Anglorum gente ex Britannia.' Iterumque dixerunt: 'Parcite illi, et nolite tangere eum.'" Eddius, c. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, III. 25.

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A.D. 634.

addressed to the Apostle Peter? "They were, without doubt," was the reply. And can you bring forward anything like such high authority for your Columba? continued the king. "None," said the bishop. "And are ye both, without controversy," rejoined Oswiu, "agreed on this, that it was especially to Peter that these words were spoken, and that to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given by the Lord?" "We are," said they. "Then," said the king, "I too declare to you, since he is the doorkeeper, I will not oppose him; but as far as I can, I will follow his commands and precepts, lest perchance, when I come to the gates of heaven, there be no one to open to me, if he turn his back upon me, who is proved to hold the keys." The king's jest was received with applause by those present. Whatever their motives were, superstitious fear, or a wish to side with the king, they concurred in his decision, and the council closed. Colman in disgust retired to Scotland; Cedd returned to his diocese, and complied with the Roman custom; Tuda, the last of the Scottish succession, succeeded to Colman's see, and likewise observed the Roman practice. Thus through the political predominance of Wessex, the influence of Wilfrid, and doubtless the prestige which the Roman see had borrowed from the Roman empire, the Roman party gained a victory in England over their Irish rivals.

*Conversion of  
Sussex.*

One kingdom only now remained where the work of the missionary was needed. This was Sussex, which though in their own neighbourhood had been strangely neglected by the Kentish clergy. It is true that Dicul, one of the companions of Fursæus, whom we have seen labouring with success in East Anglia, had visited the district, and erected an insignificant cell at Bosham, where, surrounded by woods and the sea, he had with five or six brethren, "served the Lord in humility and poverty." But his efforts had been of little avail amongst the pagan population. The

king, indeed, had received baptism in the Mercian kingdom together with his queen, but they had done little for the evangelization of their subjects<sup>1</sup>. The work was reserved for the coadjutor of Agilbert at the council of Whitby. On his return from France, where he received consecration as bishop of York, Wilfrid had been thrown on the Sussex coast, and had narrowly escaped death from the heathen wreckers<sup>2</sup>. Since then he had experienced strange vicissitudes. Driven from his diocese, hated by the new king of Northumbria, and finding no security in Wessex or Mercia, he had after his escape from prison, sought refuge amongst the heathen tribes in the wilds of Sussex, and was enabled to complete what the small Irish mission had begun and the Kentish mission had left undone. Ethelwalch the king received him with pleasure, and Wilfrid, who had already had experience in missionary work on the barbarous shores of Friesland<sup>3</sup>, undertook their conversion with alacrity. His visit was most opportune. Separated from the rest of England by forests and jungles, the wretched people had for three years suffered from drought, followed by a famine so severe, that in the depth of their despair they linked themselves hand in hand by forties and fifties, leaped from the rocks, and were dashed in pieces or drowned<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, though occupying a long line of sea-coast, they were but little acquainted with the art of fishing, and thus had the greatest difficulty in getting a livelihood<sup>4</sup>. Wilfrid, therefore, and those who were with him, saw that their mission was to civilize and feed the people of Sussex as well as preach the gospel to them. They therefore began by teaching them the art of fishing. Collecting all the nets they could find, he and his followers went out to sea, shared with the

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A.D. 681.

*Wilfrid labours  
in Sussex.*

<sup>1</sup> Wulfhere, the Mercian king, had rewarded him for his change of faith with the grant of the Isle of Wight. Bede, iv. 13. His queen had been baptized in her own country. Bede,

iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See Eddius, c. 25, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, iv. 13, and below chap. viii.

<sup>4</sup> Bede, iv. 13.

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A. D. 631—686.

poor creatures the proceeds of their success, and showed them how to provide for themselves. This, and the missionary's acquaintance with their own tongue, speedily won the hearts of his famine-stricken flock. Wilfrid himself baptized the chiefs and their warlike retinue, while the four priests who accompanied him administered the rite to the people. And on the very day of the baptism, as Bede tells the tale, the windows of heaven were opened, the refreshing shower descended, the parched land grew green, and the bodies as well as the souls of the people felt the blessing of the bishop's presence<sup>1</sup>. The king presented him with lands at Selsey, on which to build a monastery, and for five years Wilfrid performed the work of a missionary bishop among the people of Sussex, and reclaimed them from their heathenism.

*Visit of a National Church.*

Already, before this last remnant of a heathen people had been gathered into the fold of Christ, the various efforts of the different missions throughout the island had been in a great measure consolidated, and the cluster of missionary stations had begun to be converted into an established Church. The man suited for this important work had come, not from Rome, or Gaul, or the Celtic monasteries of the North, but from Tarsus, "a city of Cilicia." Nominated by Pope Vitalian in place of Wighard, and accompanied by the African Hadrian, the new archbishop brought to this island the Roman love of order and organization. As soon as he arrived he visited the several Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, and succeeded in obliterating all traces of the peculiar customs of the missionaries from Iona. Summoning a synod at Hertford<sup>2</sup>, he introduced canons for regulating the power of the bishops, defined the rites of monasteries, enacted laws respecting divorce, unlawful marriages, and other points, which have always been a source of difficulty to missionaries and infant churches, and

*Labours of Theodore.*

A. D. 668—689.

<sup>1</sup> Bede, IV. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Spelman's *Concilia*, p. 152.



further, with Hadrian's aid, he converted many of the monasteries into seminaries of useful learning, where from the lips of teachers familiar with Greek and Latin, the Anglo-Saxon youth could learn prosody, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic<sup>1</sup>.

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A.D. 638—669.

Thus within a space of less than ninety years, the work of evangelization in this island had been accomplished. The Anglo-Saxons, once notorious for their fierceness and barbarity, had so far been softened by Christian influences that in no country was the new faith more manifestly the parent of civilization. Inter-course with the metropolis of the West rapidly introduced various arts and sciences, replaced the wooden straw-thatched church of the Celtic missionary by structures fashioned after the model of the basilicas of the West, roofed them with lead, and filled them with glass, and improved the music by bringing into universal use the Gregorian chant<sup>2</sup>. The same influences before long affected also the laws; they regulated the time for bringing the Saxon child to the font, denounced a penalty if it died unbaptized, declared the spiritual relationship there contracted to be on a par with natural affinity, forbade servile work on Sundays, regulated the treatment of the slave, forbade all heathen practices, such as sorcery, necromancy, and divining<sup>3</sup>. Thus at last the vision of Gregory was realized, and the land of the fair-haired Saxon boys took its place among the Christian kingdoms, destined, in its turn, by the hands of devoted men, to transmit the light it had itself received to kindred Teutonic tribes in the Germanic forests.

*Close of the  
missionary  
period in  
England.*

<sup>1</sup> Bede, IV. 2. Lingard's *A. S. C.* I. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Lappenberg, I. 172. Bede, IV. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Spelman's *Concilia*, p. 155. Kemble, II. 490—493.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CELTIC MISSIONARIES IN SOUTHERN GERMANY.

A.D. 590—630.

“On becoming Christians one would suppose that the Celtic nations would have been softened into union and fellow-feeling. This was not the case. The Celtic Church partook of the nature of the clan. At first fecund and ardent, it seemed to take the West by storm.”—MICHELET.

CHAP. VII.

AND now having watched the rise of the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Churches, we shall see how they poured back with interest the gifts of civilization and of the Gospel upon the Roman Empire, how from this “ultima Thule” of remote barbarism, as it was once regarded, there rolled back a tide of missionary enterprize to restore vitality to the Frankish Churches, and to lead the way in converting the masses of continental heathendom. It is not meant to assert that, during the wild scenes of confusion which attended the consolidation of the Frankish kingdom none were found on the continent itself to devote themselves to the missionary work, and to tread in the steps of men like Severinus. The names of Goar<sup>1</sup> and Wulflaich are perhaps the representatives of many who have passed away

<sup>1</sup> Goar, towards the close of the sixth century, built a hut beneath the frightful rocks of the Lurlei, in the narrowest part of the Rhine, in order to save the shipwrecked, and to feed the starving wanderer. “The little town of St Goar retained,” says Menzel, “in memory of the hospitality of this saint, even to our times, the custom of placing a brass

necklace round the neck of the passing stranger, with the inquiry, ‘whether he would be baptized with water or with wine?’ If with water, he was well besprinkled; if with wine, he was offered a full golden goblet, which he emptied to the health of the emperor, and in return placed his alms in the poor’s box.” Menzel’s *Germany*, I. 219.

unhonoured and unknown, but whose labours in contrast with the general degeneracy were equally earnest and self-denying. The story of Wulflaich is characteristic of the times. He was a native of Lombardy<sup>1</sup>, and in early youth having heard of the fame of St Martin, he undertook a pilgrimage to his Church, and, after due preparation in a monastic establishment, settled down in the district of Triers, in the valley of the Moselle. Here he found a statue of Diana<sup>2</sup> to which the people offered worship, and which they regarded with the utmost veneration. Eager to turn them away from their idolatry, he erected a column at no great distance from the idol, on which he stood from morning till night, in imitation of the famous Simeon Stylites, partaking only of a little bread, oil, and a small quantity of water. The singularity of his mode of life attracted crowds to witness his austerities, and he embraced the opportunity of proclaiming to them that the deity they worshipped was a vain thing, and their sacred rites useless. The impression thus made was not lost. A portion of the people were persuaded of the impotency of their goddess, ropes were fastened to her image, and it was dragged to the ground, and broken to pieces. But his pillar austerities found little favour with the neighbouring prelates. "Thy mode of life," said they, "is not fair; it is useless for thee, unknown and ignoble, to vie with the holy Simeon of Antioch. Our climate does not admit of such austerities as these, descend from thy pillar, and mingle freely with the brethren thou hast gathered unto thee." Moved by their representations he one day consented to descend, and one of the bishops, availing himself of the opportunity, decoyed him some distance from his favourite spot, and in

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A.D. 560.

*Wulflaich.*

<sup>1</sup> See *Acta SS.* July 7. Greg. Tur. VIII. 15. Kurtz's *History of the Christian Church*, p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> Greg. Tur. VIII. 15. The Coun-

cils of Lateran (402), Arles (452) prohibit the worship of stones, trees, and other idols.

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his absence, put an end to his austerities by cutting down his pillar. From this time he lived in communion with his brethren, and laboured no less effectually and certainly more sensibly, for the spiritual welfare of the heathen tribes around.

*Irish Missionaries.*

But whatever such anchorites were enabled to accomplish, their labours were speedily eclipsed by those of ardent enthusiastic missionaries from Ireland, at this time, in the glowing language of contemporary writers, a "Garden of Eden" and an "Island of Saints." We have already observed the fervid zeal which characterized the followers of St Patrick and Columba, and in the monastery of Iona, have seen one of the many spiritual fortresses they erected in the midst of barbarian hordes, whence the monastic colony went forth on its labour of love. Blending the ardour of Christian zeal with a love of travelling and adventure, they now began to leave their quiet homes in search of more rugged fields of labour, amongst the numerous barbarian tribes of the continent<sup>1</sup>.

A.D. 559.

*Columbanus.**Birth and Education.*

One of the earliest and most eminent of these was Columbanus. Born in Leinster of noble parents, he left his home at a very early age to place himself under the venerable Senile, abbot of Cluain-inis in Lough-Erne. Under this able master, his studies embraced, besides the Holy Scriptures, grammar, rhetoric and geometry, and his rapid progress was attested by a commentary on the

<sup>1</sup> The outward appearance of these Irish anchorites was very striking. Their outfit was (1) a *cambuta*, or short pastoral staff (Jones *Vita S. Columbani*, c. 30. Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 324), (2) a leathern water-bottle, (we have a *utrem lactarium*, *Vita S. Columbe*, II. 38), (3) a wallet (Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 116), (4) a leathern case for the service-books ("*libros in pelliceo reconditos sacco habebat*," *Adamn. Vita S.*

*Columbe*, II. 8, where see in note Reeves' account of the leather cover of the Book of Armagh), (5) a case containing relics. In the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. VII. p. 303, it is said that "the Irish anchorites were in the habit of painting their eyelids," which reminds us of the painted Britons. "*Stigmata, signa, pictura in corpore, quales Scoti pingunt in palpebris*." Haften's *Denkmäler*, I. 227, 237.

Psalms, which he composed at an early age, and other religious works. Resolved on embracing the monastic state, he left Cluain-inis for the monastery of Banchor, on the coast of Ulster, and submitted to the discipline of the eminent abbot St Comgall<sup>1</sup>. But he was before long seized with the craving for foreign travel which distinguished so many of his countrymen<sup>2</sup>, and a desire to preach the Gospel to the pagan tribes on the continent. In vain his abbot endeavoured to dissuade him from his intention, and to quench the fire of zeal which had been kindled within his breast. He had no sooner reached the age of thirty, than selecting twelve companions he bade farewell to his brethren<sup>3</sup>, and after barely touching on the shores of pagan Britain, landed in Gaul.

CHAP. VII.

A.D. 550.

*Lands in France.*

A.D. 589.

In Burgundy he was welcomed by Guntram, the least blameworthy of the grandsons of Clovis, and he might there have found a secure retreat, and a sphere of useful labour. But his ascetic spirit longed for a sterner mission-field. The words of Christ, "Whosoever will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me," constantly sounded in his ears, and he resolved to seek a country where he could practise such self-denial, and be His disciple indeed. On the confines of the kingdom of Austrasia and Burgundy rose the wild and desolate range of the Vosges, and tribes of pagan Suevians roamed over districts once colonized by the Roman legionaries. Hither he determined to retire, and with his twelve followers first settled amidst the ruins of the small town of Ane-

<sup>1</sup> Born in 517, died in 602. His great monastery of *Beannchar in Altitude Ulteriorum*, "Bangor in the Ards of Ulster," was founded in 558. It dwindled away after the invasion of the Danes. See Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 213 n. *Ecel. Antiq.* 334—342.

<sup>2</sup> "Natio Scotorum, quibus consuetudo peregrinandi jam pæne in

naturam conversa est." *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, *Mon. Germ.* II. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Their names, though there is considerable variation in the accounts, were Gallus, Deicola, Sigisbertus, Columbanus the younger, Cummin, Eunoc, Eeconan (= Acquon), Domitialis, Kilian, Neemias, Lua, Florentius. Lanigan, II. 264 n.

## CHAP. VII.

A D. 590.

*Founds the Monastery of Luxeuil, Anegray, and Fontaines.*

gray. Here, and at Luxeuil, were charms for the severest ascetic. Over a range of sixty leagues, and a breadth of ten or fifteen, nothing was to be seen but parallel chains of inaccessible defiles, divided by endless forests<sup>1</sup>, "whose bristling pinewoods descended from the peaks of the highest mountains to the banks of the rapid streams of the Doubs, Dessoubre, and Loue." War and devastation had wellnigh effaced the traces of Roman colonization; what Roman industry had cultivated, the sword of the barbarous invader, and especially of Attila, had restored to solitude, and made once more the haunts of the bear and the wolf<sup>2</sup>. No spot could have been found more suited to the spirit of Columbanus: nowhere could he and his companions better learn self-denial and mortification, or inure themselves to severer labours. Strange stories have come down to us of the hardships which from time to time these colonizers of the desert were fain to endure, how they supported themselves on the bark of trees and wild herbs, and in seasons of extreme need, experienced unforeseen, and, as they deemed, miraculous aid. At length a monastery arose amidst the waste, formed on the model of those which Columba raised under the oaks of Derry or in sea-girt Hy<sup>3</sup>. At Anegray and Luxeuil the boundaries of the monastic colony were duly marked out, and the forest cleared. Within these rose the humble cells of thatch and wattles, and, conspicuously, the church, beside which was often the round tower or steeple, which served as a place of refuge in times of need<sup>4</sup>. In fields reclaimed from desola-

<sup>1</sup> Montalembert's *Monks of the West*, II. 404. "Luxovium ibi imaginum lapidearum densitas vicini saltus densabat, quas cultu miserabili rituque profano vetusta paganorum tempora honorabant." *Acta SS. Bened.* II. 12.

<sup>2</sup> "At nunc solæ illic feræ belluæ, ursi, bubali, lupi frequenter visebantur." *Jonæ Vita Columb.* c. 17.

<sup>3</sup> On the similarity of the oratories erected abroad by the Irish ecclesiastics to those in their native country, see Petrie's *Round Towers*, pp. 347, 418.

<sup>4</sup> See an interesting account of the Irish monasteries in Germany by Dr Wattenbach (*Die Kongregation der Schotten Klöster in Deutschland*), translated in the *Ulster Jour-*

tion the seed was sown, and before long the brethren reaped the waving corn. Nor did their mysterious life fail to move the hearts of men around. Hundreds flocked to listen to their religious instructions, hundreds more, encouraged by their labours in clearing and tilling the land, took to copying their example; at Anegray, at Luxeuil, at Fontaines, they beheld forests cleared, trees felled, and the land ploughed or reaped by the same assiduous hands, all obedient to one head, who sometimes mingled in, and always encouraged their useful labours.

A Rule, probably derived from the Irish Bangor, and severer than that of Benedict, bound every member of these fraternities. Incessant labour either in the field, or in copying manuscripts, the punctilious observance of repeated devotional services, three by day and three by night, the severest discipline extending to every motion of the body, regulating even the tone of the voice, these and other methods were employed by the ardent abbot to mould to implicit obedience those who courted admission into his cloisters. "Obedience" is the heading of the first canon in his rule, and the question, "What are the limits of obedience?" is answered, "*Even unto death; for unto death Christ submitted Himself to the Father for us*<sup>1</sup>." The perfection of the monk is thus described: "Let the monk live under the discipline of one father, and in the society of many, that from the one he may learn humility, from the other patience, from the one silence, from the other

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A. D. 590.

*Severity of the Rules of Columban.*

*nal of Archaeology*, July, Aug. 1859. As at Iona, so here we read of the *cenobium*, the *ecclesia*, the *refectarium*, the *horreum*, the *vallum*, the *cellarium*, of *plaustra*, and *jumenta*. The brethren "sarculis terram excolunt, et jaciendo semini arva præparant," (Jonas, cap. 17); or "segetum copia in horrea conditur"—while the abbot himself "cum reliquis medius præcidit segetes," (cap. 13.)

On the Round Tower, see Petrie, p. 374, where there is a curious quotation from Mabillon's *Iter Germanicum*, respecting a beacon-tower at the monastery of Luxeuil, as also some remarks, p. 391, on a Round Tower belfry at Bobbio.

<sup>1</sup> *S. Columbani Reg. Cænob.* cap. I. Migne, *Script. Eccl. Minores*, Sæc. VII. p. 210.

gentleness; let him never gratify his own wishes; let him eat what he is bidden; let him possess only what he receives; let him perform his allotted task; only when wearied let him retire to bed: let him learn to sleep as he walks, and be compelled to rise before he has slept sufficiently; when he is injured let him hold his peace; the head of the monastery let him fear as a master, and love as a father; let him believe that whatever he orders is for his good, nor question the opinion of his elders, seeing that it is his duty to obey, and to fulfil all that is right. Let his fare be homely and sparing<sup>1</sup>, sufficient to support life without weighing down the spirit, a little bread, vegetables, pulse, or flour mixed with water; let this be his diet, as becometh one who professes to seek an eternal crown<sup>2</sup>."

*Regulations  
respecting  
discipline.*

Such was to be the daily life. Meanwhile all offences of the hand, the eye, the foot, the voice, were punished sometimes with penance, or long periods of silence, or lowly postures, and sometimes with blows. The tenth chapter of the Rule regulates the number of the latter with the utmost minuteness according to the nature of the offence. Six blows were awarded to the brother who failed to say grace before a meal, or to join in the "Amen" after the abbot's blessing, or said anything was his own, or neglected to sign his cup with the cross, or talked too loud, or coughed during the psalmody, or stared about him during the service. Acts of insubordination, answering when reprimanded, indulging unchaste thoughts, called down heavier punishments, even, in some cases, upwards of two hundred blows, though more than twenty-five might not be inflicted at one time. Puerile as many of these regulations may appear,

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. Cœnob.* cap. 9. Montalembert, II. 405.

<sup>2</sup> The monastic duties are thus summed up: "quotidie jejunandum

est, sicut quotidie orandum est, quotidie laborandum, quotidie est legendum." *Reg. Cœn.* cap. 3.



Columbanus was yet far from teaching his brethren that the essence of piety consisted in externals. Again and again he reminds them that true religion consists not in humility of the body, but of the heart, and bids them consider these punctilious observances not as ends but as means. He himself ever set them a worthy example. He united practical energy with a disposition for contemplation. It was his delight to penetrate into the deepest recesses of the forest, and there to read and meditate on the Scriptures, which he always carried with him. On Sundays and high festivals he abstracted himself yet more from outward things. Seeking a cave or some other secluded spot, he would devote himself entirely to prayer and meditation, and so prepare for celebrating the services of the day without distraction. If he demanded incessant self-denial of his followers, he himself fell not short of his own requirements. "Whosoever overcomes himself," he was wont to say, "treads the world underfoot; no one, who spares himself, can truly hate the world. If Christ be in us we cannot live to ourselves, if we have conquered ourselves we have conquered all things; if the Creator of all things died for us while yet in our sins, ought not we to die to sin? Let us die unto ourselves. Let us live in Christ, that Christ may live in us."

These quotations, and others to the same effect might be multiplied, express the innermost feelings of his heart, and the principles however exaggerated which he sought to instil into the order he had founded, in superintending which and directing the civilizing efforts of his monastic colony, he found constant occupation for twelve years. But he was not without his anxieties. The severity of his life, and his zeal for monastic discipline, excited the prejudices of the Frankish clergy, whose own lethargy and worldliness were strangely out of harmony with his lifelong self-denial. The pertinacity with which he clung to

*Jealousy of  
the Frankish  
Clergy.*

CHAP. VII.  
A.D. 602.

*Letter to Gregory  
the Great.*

the customs he had learnt from his teachers in Ireland, and especially the time for the observance of Easter, did not mend matters. Already, as early as the year 599, this latter subject is the burden of a letter he addressed to Gregory I., in which while expressing all due respect for his exalted position he asserts his independence, and refuses to correct what he deemed to be right. After alluding to two reformers of the paschal cycles, Anatolius, bishop of Laodicea, and Victorius, presbyter of Limoges, and declaring that he rejected the calculations of the latter, as novel and unauthorised, though supported by the Roman see, he thus addresses the Pope; "Either, then, excuse or condemn your Victorius; but know that should you approve him, the matter of the faith will lie between you and Jerome, who without doubt commended Anatolius though disagreeing with Victorius, so that whoever follows the one cannot receive the other. Take care, therefore, that in approving the faith of the two aforesaid authors, thus disagreeing with one another, there be no discordance between you and Jerome in the decision you give, lest we be perplexed on every side, and compelled to take part either with you or him. In this matter spare the weak, lest you lay bare the scandal of a disagreement. For I plainly acknowledge to you, that any one who ventures to dissent from the authority of Jerome will be regarded as a heretic, and one to be rejected in the Churches of the West, for to him they accommodate their faith in the divine Scriptures in all things without hesitation<sup>1</sup>."

Before long, his adherence to his Irish customs induced several Frankish bishops to convene a synod and deliberate how they should act towards the intrepid abbot. Accord-

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* i. Migne, p. 263. "Legi librum tuum," he continues, "Pastorale regimen continentem stylo brevem, doctrina prolixum, mysteriorum refertum, melle dulcius agenti

opus esse fateor; mihi idcirco tua sitienti largire, precor, opuscula quæ in Ezechielem miro, ut audiavi, elaborasti ingenio." Todd's *Irish Church*, p. 57.

ingly, he addressed them a letter, wherein after expressing his thankfulness that they had met on his account, and his wish that they met oftener, as the canons require, and referring them on the Easter question to his correspondence with Gregory<sup>1</sup>, he assures them with pathetic dignity that he was not the author of this difference: "I came as a stranger amongst you in behalf of our common Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In His name, I beseech you, let me live in peace and quiet, as I have lived for twelve years in these woods beside the bones of my seventeen departed brethren. Let Gaul receive into her bosom all who, if they deserve it, will meet in one heaven. For we have one kingdom promised us, and one hope of our calling in Christ, with whom we shall reign together, if first we suffer with Him here on earth. Choose ye which rule respecting Easter ye prefer to follow, remembering the words of the Apostle, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good*. But let us not quarrel one with another, lest our enemies, the Jews, the heretics, and pagan Gentiles, rejoice in our contention." And he concludes, "Pray for us, my fathers, even as we, humble as we are, pray for you. Regard us not as strangers, for we are members together of one body, whether we be Gauls, or Britons, or Iberians, or to whatever nation we belong. Therefore let us all rejoice in the knowledge of the faith, and the revelation of the Son of God, and let us strive earnestly to attain together unto the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ<sup>2</sup>, in communion with whom let us learn to love one another, and praise one another, and correct one another, and pray for one another, that with Him we may together reign for evermore."

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* 2. "Quid quidem illi sentiunt de Pascha sive papæ per tres tomos innotui, et adhuc sancto

fratri vestro Arigio brevi libello hoc idem scribere præsumpsi."

<sup>2</sup> *Eph.* iv. 13.

CHAP. VII.

A.D. 610.

*Opposition of  
Brunehaut.*

Thus with mingled firmness and pathos does the abbot plead with the Frankish bishops. But he was soon called to engage in a nobler strife, and to protest against the vices of the Burgundian court, at this time ruled by the notorious Brunehaut, who fleeing from the palace of Theodebert of Austrasia, had taken up her abode with her younger son Thierry. The king, who had forgotten the old Teutonic virtues of his sires, had given himself up to the unbridled indulgence of his lusts, and the unscrupulous Brunehaut, conniving at his licentiousness, sought to gain a complete ascendancy in his kingdom, and to rule him through his vices. The fame of the abbot of Luxeuil attracted Thierry, and he often visited his retreat. The abbot did not neglect the opportunity thus afforded him. "His life was lightning, he could make his words thunder." Sternly he rebuked the king for his incontinence, and bade him leave his countless mistresses for the society of a queen, who might bring him a legitimate heir. The voluptuous Thierry quailed before the saint, and promised amendment. But this was easier said than done. Brunehaut saw in a legitimate queen a death-blow to her influence, and her rage against the abbot knew no bounds. His saintly character and the reverence with which he was regarded saved him from the fate of Didier, bishop of Vienne, who had paid with his life for bold rebuke of Thierry's incontinence. Whether at her solicitation, or of his own accord, the abbot one day visited the palace, and the queen-mother implored his blessing on the king's two illegitimate sons. "These bastards born in sin," was the uncompromising reply, "shall never wield the royal sceptre." Brunehaut, furious, bade the children retire, and from that day forward commenced a series of petty persecutions. She cut off supplies from his monasteries, stirred up jealousy between them and neighbouring convents. Thereupon the abbot determined once more to repair to the

court, and to remonstrate with the queen. It was sunset when he appeared before the palace, and on his arrival being announced the king ordered a sumptuous supper to be prepared and sent out to him. "It is written," said the saint, "that the Most High abhors the offerings of the wicked: the mouth of the servants of God must not be polluted with food given by one who persecutes them and wickedly excludes them not only from their own, but from the habitation of others." Thereupon, according to his biographer, the dishes miraculously brake in pieces, and the wine and other viands were spilt upon the earth. The king, alarmed at this intelligence, promised amendment, and the abbot withdrew to Luxeuil, whence he indited a letter full of the severest rebukes, and threatening the king with excommunication if he did not repent of his adulteries. It was Brunehaut's turn now. She inflamed the mind of the king against the stern monitor, she roused the nobles and courtiers, and appealing to the bishops strove to rouse their jealousy against the stranger monk and his strange rule. At last Thierri, stung to the quick, repaired to Luxeuil, and demanded a free entrance for his courtiers to the monastery. Columbanus replied with awful denunciations. The king attempted to enter the refectory, but dared not go further, so terrible was the language of the abbot. "Thou thinkest," he said with a sneer, "I shall confer on thee a martyr's crown; I am not so utterly foolish as to gratify thy pride, but thou shalt go hence by the way by which thou camest." The abbot refused to stir from his cell<sup>1</sup>. At length force was used, and the unpromising monk was carried away to Besançon. But he managed to elude his guards, and made his way back to Luxeuil. Again he was taken, and with two or three of his disciples hurried off to Auxerre, and thence to Nevers, where he was placed in a boat and conveyed to Orleans.

*Columbanus  
banished to  
Besançon.*

<sup>1</sup> *Jenæ Vita S. Columbanî*, capp. 19, 20.

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A.D. 610.

Here he was forbidden to enter any of the churches, and was removed to Tours, and so to Nantes, where he was put on board a vessel bound for Ireland<sup>1</sup>. But the miracles, which had attended him at every stage of his journey by land, did not fail him now. A storm arose, and the vessel was cast back and left high and dry on the coast of Neustria; nor till the abbot and all belonging to him had been put on shore did the waters return and float the ship to sea. He was now in the kingdom of Clothaire II. who besought him to remain with him, and hallow his realm with his presence. Columbanus could only be persuaded to stay a few days at the court, and after giving the king advice in some political matters, requested a safe conduct to the court of the Austrasian Theodebert. His request was granted, and he reached his destination in safety. Theodebert received him with delight, but could not prevail upon him to remain more than a brief space in his dominions.

*Repairs to Zug.*

Many of the brethren from Luxeuil had now flocked around the abbot, and he pined for the solitude which had been so long denied him<sup>2</sup>. With a few followers therefore he repaired to Mentz, whence they embarked on the Rhine, and making their way to the mouth of the Limmat, reached the shores of the lake of Zurich, halting finally at Tugium, the modern Zug, where Columban resolved to stay awhile and preach to the pagan Suevians. His labours might have been attended with success, had the means he employed been more calculated to win the affections of the people. But the abbot of Luxeuil and his companions preferred wielding the weapons of a Boanerges to trying

<sup>1</sup> "Reperta ergo navi, quæ *Scotorum commercia vexerat*, omnem suppellectilem comitesque suscepit." Jonas, *Vita Columbani*, c. 22.

<sup>2</sup> "Igitur optio ei a rege dabatur, si alieubi aptum locum experiretur; in qua inquisitione venerunt ad flu-

vium Lindimacum (hodie *Limmat*), quem sequendo adierunt castellum Turegum vocatum, (*Zürich*). Inde etenim adierunt villam vulgo vocatam Tueconia, (*Tuggen*) quæ in capite ipsius Tureginensis est sita." *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, *Mon. Germ.* II. p. 6.

the gentler efforts of the Apostle of Love. The Suevians are described as cruel and impious, offering sacrifice to idols, and addicted to augury and divination<sup>1</sup>. Gallus, one of his companions, set fire to their wooden temples, and flung their idols into the lake. Columbanus himself, on one occasion, according to his biographer, came upon a number of the people as they were about to offer sacrifice, and make libations to Woden from a huge vat of beer. Discovering their purpose, the abbot breathed over the vat, which forthwith burst, and scattered its contents in all directions. The heathen Suevians arose in wrath, and resolved to drive the interfering missionaries<sup>2</sup> from their country. Thereupon the latter were obliged to fly, and the Abbot of Luxeuil, after shaking off the dust from his feet, left them with awful maledictions, devoting them and their children to misery in this world, and perdition in the world to come.

Leaving Zug, Columbanus and his companions shaped their course to Arbon, on the lake of Constance, where they found a priest named Willimar, and were received with great cordiality. Seven days were spent in harmonious intercourse, and in reply to the inquiries of his visitors, Willimar pointed out Bregenz, on the south-eastern side of the lake, as well adapted for the site of a monastery, and for being the centre of missionary activity. A boat was manned by the friendly priest, and Columbanus and his companions made for the spot, and found it well suited

A.D. 611

*Founds a Monastery at Bregenz.*

<sup>1</sup> "Homines ibidem commanentes crudeles erant et impii, simulacra colentes, idola sacrificiis venerantes, observantes auguria et divinationes, et multa quæ contraria sunt cultui divino, superstitiones sectantes." Walafrid Strabo, *Vita S. Columbani*, cap. 4.

<sup>2</sup> "Sanctus autem Columbanus hæc audiens orabat: Deus rector poli, in cujus arbitrio totus mundus decurrit, fac generationem istam in im-

properium, ut, quæ improbe excogitant servis tuis, sentiant in capitibus suis. Fiant nati eorum in interitum; ergo cum ad mediam ætatem perveniant, stupor ac dementia eos apprehendant, ita ut alieno ære oppressi ignominiam suam agnoscant conversi; impleaturque in eis prophetia psalmiographi dicentis, *convertatur dolor ejus in caput ejus, et in verticem ipsius iniquitas ejus descendat.*" *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, II. 7.

for their purpose. On landing they discovered a church, originally dedicated to St Aurelia, and in the immediate neighbourhood they built a monastery. A closer examination revealed the fact that in this church were three images of brass<sup>1</sup> gilded, fixed to the wall, which the people were wont to worship as the presiding deities of the place, and to invoke as their protectors. These "strange gods" Columbanus determined to remove, and availing himself of a festival when great numbers flocked to the spot, he directed Gallus, who was acquainted with the native language, to address the people on the foolishness of their idolatry, and to persuade them to embrace the true faith<sup>2</sup>. Gallus complied with the request of his superior, and in the presence of a vast multitude who had flocked together to celebrate the festival and to catch a sight of the strangers, reasoned with them on the absurdities of their heathen errors, and proclaimed the One Living and True God and His Son Jesus Christ. Then taking the idols, he broke them in pieces and flung them into the lake, while Columbanus sprinkled the church with holy water, and restored it to its former honour. The people were divided. Some approved the boldness of the abbot, and were converted to the faith, others went away filled with anger and bent on revenge. Here, however, he remained for three years. A monastery<sup>3</sup> was erected, a portion of the forest

<sup>1</sup> "Repererunt autem in templo tres imagines æreas deauratas, parietibus affixas, quas populus, dimisso altaris sacri cultu, adorabat, et oblatiis sacrificiis, dicere consuevit, Isti sunt dii veteres, et antiqui hujus loci tutores, quorum solatio et nos et nostra perdurant in præsens." Wal. Strabo, cap. 6. Pertz, II. 7.

<sup>2</sup> "Vir Dei jussit Gallo ad populum recitare sermonem, quia ille inter alios eminebat lepore latinitatis, necnon et idiomete illius gentis." Pertz, II. 7. Gallus, or Callech

(now Coileach), was another Irish disciple, he was of Leinster extraction, being of the same race as St Brigid. The practice of Latinizing the Irish names of these anchorites was very common, thus *Fergal* was called *Virgilius*, *Siadhail* *Sedulius*, *Cathac* *Cataldus*, *Donnachadh* *Donatus*, *Comgall* *Faustus*, &c. See note in *Ulster Archaeol. Journal*, VII. p. 242.

<sup>3</sup> Where, according to the life of Gallus preserved in Pertz, the brethren "in morem parvissimæ matris apes ingenium exercebant in artibus



was cleared, the land cultivated, and while some of the brethren laid out gardens and planted fruit-trees, Gallus busied himself with making nets and fishing on the lake, and thus supplied the wants of his brethren. The success of the missionaries at Bregenz may be accounted for by the fact that the country had formerly been Christian, and many of the inhabitants had been baptized, though in consequence of the incursions of the Alemanni they had subsequently, as in the instance above, lapsed into idolatry. That the native deities did not regard the exertions of the missionaries with complacency, is attested by the following story, which the biographer of Gallus records with undoubting faith. The holy man was one night engaged in fishing on the quiet waters of the lake, when he overheard the Spirit of the Mountain call to the Spirit of the Waters, "Arise and come to my assistance! Behold, strangers have come and driven me from my temple! Haste to the rescue, and help me to expel them from the land!" To whom replied the Spirit of the Waters, "Lo! one of them is even now busied on my surface, but injure him I cannot. Often have I wished to break his nets, but as often have I been baffled, for the invocation of an all-prevailing Name never fails to cross his lips; thus defended and ever vigilant he always despises my snares<sup>1</sup>." Gallus shuddered at this unearthly dialogue, but quickly crossing himself addressed the spirits, "I adjure you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye depart from this place, and never dare to injure any one any more." He then hastily made for the shore, and recounted to the abbot what he had heard, who rejoiced at this manifest proof that "the spirits were subject" unto the brethren. Human hostility, however, they

diversis." This Walafrid Strabo explains thus: "Alii hortum laboraverunt, alii arbores pomiferas excoluerunt: beatus vero Gallus texebat retia, et misericordia Dei cooperante, tantam piscium copiam cepit, ut nun-

quam fratribus defuissent." The lake abounds in fish at the present day, and more than 25 species have been enumerated.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, II. 8. Ozanam, p. 122.

CHAP. VII.  
A.D. 612.

*Letters to Bobbio.*

could not so easily overcome, and the machinations of the heathen party, who prejudiced against them one of the native chieftains, as also the fact that his friend Theodobert had been defeated by Theodoric, induced Columbanus to leave the neighbourhood. His first intention was to labour amongst the Slavonians, but changing his mind he crossed the Alps with several of the brethren, and repaired to the court of Agilulf king of the Lombards, who with his queen Theodelinda welcomed him with the utmost cordiality. Here he settled, and founded the monastery of Bobbio<sup>1</sup>. Declining the invitation of Clotaire II. who sent Eustasius, one of the brethren, to request his return to Luxeuil, he spent the few remaining years of his life in literary labours<sup>2</sup> in his new monastery, and died at the ripe age of seventy-two, A. D. 615.

A. D. 615.

Meanwhile his companion Gallus, prevented by a severe attack of fever from accompanying his master across the Alps, remained behind at Bregenz. On his recovery he sought out his old friend Willimar at Arbon, and in his society, and that of two of the Luxeuil brethren, Magnoald and Theodore, found ample employment for his boat and nets on the waters of the lake.

*Labours of St Gall.*

A. D. 612.

But soon yearning, like his master, for profounder solitudes, he determined to seek a retreat in the midst of the surrounding forests. On communicating his design to Hildebald, a deacon under Willimar, who was intimately

<sup>1</sup> The same abbatial presidency prevailed at Bobbio as at Ily and Lindisfarne. "Episcopus, quem pater monasterii, vel tota congregatio invitaverit ad missarum solennia celebranda, aut consecrationes Presbyterorum seu Diaconorum...ipse habeat facultatem in idem monasterium ingrediendi, tantum ad pii opus monasterii peragendum. Nullam potestatem habere permittat Episcopus in eodem monasterio, neque in rebus, neque in ordinandis personis,

nisi eum, quem cuncta Congregatio regulariter elegerit." Messingham, *Florileg.* 248 b. Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 341 n.

<sup>2</sup> The monastery of Bobbio existed as late even as the year 1803. Its valuable library preserved not only Cicero's *de Republica*, but an Irish Antiphonarium of the eighth century, and an Irish Missal. The name of its founder still survives in St Columbano, near Lodi.

acquainted with the woods, the latter tried to dissuade him, by describing the perils of the forest and the multitude of wild beasts<sup>1</sup>. "If God be with us," replied Gallus, "who can be against us? all things work together for good to them that love God." Thus overruled the deacon persuaded him at least to take some bread and a fishing net, and after prayer the two set out on their journey. They had travelled till nearly three in the afternoon, when the deacon proposed that they should stop and refresh themselves before proceeding further. But Gallus, true to the rule of his master, bade the deacon do as he pleased, but declared that for himself he was resolved to taste nothing till God should point out the site of their retreat. Evening was closing on a long summer-day as they reached a stream falling down from a rock, where they succeeded in taking a few fish, which the deacon proceeded to broil over a fire, while the other in the meantime retired to seek a quiet spot, where he might engage in prayer. He had not gone far when his foot caught in some bushes, and he fell down. The deacon hastened to raise him up, but Gallus declined his aid, saying, "Let me alone, this is my resting-place for life, here will I dwell." Then rising up he made a cross of hazel boughs and planted it in the ground, and suspending from it his casket of relics, continued for some time engaged in prayer that God would enable him to erect a monastery on this spot. Their devotions ended, the two partook of supper, and while the deacon pretended to be asleep, Gallus engaged in conflict with a bear, which, however, his biographer tells us, in obedience to the words of so holy a man, condescended to lay aside his usual ferocity, and to leave them unharmed. In the morning the

*He seeks another retreat.*

<sup>1</sup> "O Pater, solitudo aquis est infusa frequentibus, asperitate terribilis, montibus plena percelsis, angustis vallibus flexuosa, bestiis possessa sævissimis. Nam præter cervos,

et innocuorum greges, animalium, ursos gignit plurimos, apros innumera-  
rabiles, lupos numerum excedentes, rabie singulares." *Vita S. Galli*, cap. 9, Pertz, II. 8.

CHAP. VII.

A. D. 613-14.

deacon repaired to the stream of the Steinach, and while fishing beheld two dæmons in the form of women, who pelted him with stones, and imprecated curses on the head of his master<sup>1</sup>. He returned to Gallus, and the dæmons were found as obedient to his word as the bear had been on the preceding night, and forsook the stream. With a present of fish they now made their way back to Willimar, and recounted all that had befallen them. Shortly afterwards, according to a story which rests on somewhat doubtful authority, a message from Gunzo the pagan chieftain who had been instrumental in expelling Columbanus from the country, summoned Gallus to cure his daughter, who was possessed with a dæmon. The spirit recognised the voice of him who had spoken words of power on the lake, the maiden recovered, and on her arrival at the court of the king of Austrasia<sup>2</sup>, to whom she was espoused, recounted all that had befallen her, and secretly took the veil, a step which had been suggested by the missionary, and was not resented by the king. The valuable presents, which were bestowed upon him in acknowledgment of the benefit he had conferred, Gallus distributed among the poor of Arbon. Among them was a silver cup, which one of his disciples begged him to keep for the service of the altar: "Silver and gold have I none," replied the other; "vessels of brass sufficed my master for the celebration of the Sacred Feast, and they shall be sufficient for me. Let it be given to the poor<sup>3</sup>."

He then retired permanently to his retreat in the forest, where he was joined by a deacon named John and twelve other monks, with whose assistance he cleared the waste,

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, II. 9.

<sup>2</sup> From whom St Gall received the grant of the land on which he founded his monastery. "Rex vero jussit scribere epistolam firmitatis, ut per regiam auctoritatem deinceps obtinisset vir Dei cellulam suam, quæ

vero Deo transmittebatur cum duabus libris auri, et binis talentis argenti." Pertz, II. 11.

<sup>3</sup> See *Vita S. Magni*, cap. 9. *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, II. 12. Lanigan, II. 433.

and erected the famous monastery which now bears his name<sup>1</sup>. The see of Constance falling vacant, he repaired thither with the deacons John and Magnoald on the invitation of the duke Gunzo, and there met the bishops of Autun, Spire and Verdun, and a large body of clergy and laity assembled to elect a successor. After some deliberation Gunzo addressed them, and exhorted them to choose a proper bishop according to the Canons, and one who would rule his see with diligence. The eyes of all were fixed upon Gallus, and all agreed that no other was so fitted for the high office. But the missionary declined the proffered honour, remarking that the Canons, except in the most urgent cases, did not permit strangers to be ordained bishops of districts of which they were not natives<sup>2</sup>. "But," he added, "I have a deacon of your own people who is well fitted to fill the office, and I propose him for your acceptance." Thereupon the deacon John, who during their deliberations had retired to the church of St Stephen, was brought forth with acclamations by the people, presented to the bishops, and forthwith consecrated. Mass was then celebrated, and after reading the Gospel, Gallus was requested to preach to the assembled multitude. Accordingly he commenced his sermon, which the newly elected bishop interpreted. The discourse<sup>3</sup> was little more than an abridged history of religion, and of the chief events from the Creation to the preaching of the Apostles. The Origin of the world, the Fall of our first parents, the Flood, the Call of Abraham, the miracles of Moses, the kingly period of

CHAP. VII.

A. D. 615.

*Founds the  
monastery of  
St Gallus.**Declines the See  
of Constance.**His Sermon.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Galli*, apud Pertz, cap. 3. Wal. Strabo, capp. 22—25.

<sup>2</sup> See *Vita S. Galli*, Pertz, II. 9. In the 2nd Epistle of Pope Celestine to the bishops of Vienne and Narbon we find it laid down: "Nec emeritis in suis ecclesiis clericis peregrini et extranei, et qui ante ignorati sunt, ad exclusionem eorum, qui bene de

suorum civium merentur, testimonio preponantur: ne novum quoddam de quo episcopi fiant, institutum videatur collegium."

<sup>3</sup> It is given in full in Canisius, *Antiq. Lect.* I. 784, and the *Acta SS.* Oct. 16. In an abridged form in Pertz, *Vita S. Galli*, II. 14.

CHAP. VII.

A.D. 615.

Israel's history, the calling and functions of the Prophets, the miracle of the Incarnation, the Sufferings, Death, and Resurrection of man's Redeemer, the mission of the Apostles, each of these points was treated in turn, and made the text of some moral observations.

*Retires to his  
new monastery.*

Seven days were spent at Constance, and then Gallus returned to his cell in the forest, where he spent the rest of his life, superintending for twelve years the labours of his monastic brethren. Receiving information of the death of his great master, Columbanus, he sent one of his disciples to make inquiries as to the day and hour of his demise, and received in reply a letter from the brethren at Bobbio, and the pastoral staff of the great abbot which the latter had bequeathed to him. Once, and only once more, did he consent to leave his retreat. At the urgent request of Willimar he paid a visit to him at Arbon, and on the occasion of a solemnity preached to a large congregation. Setting out on his return he was attacked with fever, and before he could regain his favourite retreat, he died on the 16th of October<sup>1</sup>, 627. His had been a life eminent for self-denial and usefulness: he had revived the faith in the ancient see of Constance, he had reclaimed from barbarism the district bordering on the Black Forest, he had taught the people the arts of agriculture as well as the duties of religion; and the humble cell of the Apostle of Switzerland became after his death the resort of thousands of pilgrims, and was replaced by a more magnificent edifice, erected under the auspices of Philip l'Heristal, which during the ninth and tenth centuries was the asylum of learning, and one of the most celebrated schools of Europe.

A.D. 627.

After the death of this eminent missionary, many, whom the intelligence of his labours stirred up to a godly

<sup>1</sup> See the discussion of the date in the *Acta SS.* October 16. "It was left to the decision of horses to deter-

mine where the mortal remains of St Gall should rest." See Pertz, II. 17.

jealousy, left the monasteries of Ireland to penetrate the Germanic forests. Without attempting to enumerate all, we may mention, among others, Fridolin<sup>1</sup>, who, like Gallus, sought the neighbourhood of Switzerland, Suabia, and Alsace, and founded a monastery near Seckingen on the Rhine. Magnoald<sup>2</sup> also, or Magnus, the pupil of Gallus, founded a monastery at Füssen in Suabia; and Trudpert, an Irish anchorite, penetrated as far as Breisgau, in the Black Forest, where he was murdered. Somewhat later, Kilian, a bishop of the order of Hy, into whose breast had deeply sunk the admonition of the Saviour to leave all and follow Him, sailed from Ireland, with two companions, and selected Würzburg in Franconia as the scene of his operations<sup>3</sup>. A somewhat untrustworthy biographer represents him as going to Rome, and seeking the approbation and direction of the Pope Conon before entering on his mission. Encouraged by that pontiff to carry on the work, he returned to Würzburg<sup>4</sup>, and being able to preach in the language of the people, was not long before he made a considerable impression. One of the native chiefs, Gozbert, sent for him, and after hearing an explanation of the doctrines of the Christian faith, was received into the Church by baptism, and his influence with the people was, as usual, sufficient to induce numbers of them to profess at least an outward allegiance to the new faith. One point, however, caused the missionary considerable anxiety. Geilana the wife of Gozbert had been married to his brother<sup>5</sup>, and though at first the fear

CHAP. VII.

Fridolin.

Magnoald.

Trudperi.

A.D. 642.

Kilian.

A.D. 650—689.

<sup>1</sup> See *Acta SS.* March 6; but the life is considered too legendary to be relied upon. Lanigan, II. 477.

<sup>2</sup> See *Acta SS.* April 26. Neander, v. 50. Similarly uncertain are the accounts of Pirminius the founder of Reichenau.

<sup>3</sup> See *Vita S. Kiliani*, in Messingham's Collection, p. 321, and *Acta SS.* Oct. 8. Lanigan, III. 115.

<sup>4</sup> "The Würzburg Gospels, a MS. of the anti-Hieronymian Latin version dating in the VIIIth century, preserves the memory and Irish learning of S. Kilian." See *Christian Remembrancer*, No. CXVI.

<sup>5</sup> "Erat illi conjux secundum gentilitatis ritum quæ quondam fratris ipsius conjugio fuerat copulata."

CHAP. VII.  
A. D. 656—689.

*Gozbert and  
Geilana.*

of alienating him entirely from the faith had induced Kilian to pass over this irregularity, he now broke silence, and openly told him, that if he would be a Christian indeed, he must put away his wife. "He who keepeth the whole law," said he to Gozbert, "and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all. In baptism a man is made a new creature, not partially, but entirely: if therefore, he would be wholly renewed, he must retain no portion of his old errors." The chief was stupefied at this demand upon his devotion; "heaving a deep sigh," says the biographer, "for he dearly loved his wife, he replied to the bishop, 'Father, I have often heard thee tell how the Lord Jesus Christ said, 'Whosoever loveth father, or mother, or wife, or children, more than Me, is not worthy of Me.' Great, therefore, as is my affection for my wife, I feel I must give her up, if I would retain His love.'" Being, however, on the point of setting out on a warlike expedition, he could not promise instant compliance, but declared his readiness, on his return, to bring about a separation. Meanwhile, Geilana, gaining a knowledge of what was intended, determined to frustrate his design. Hiring two assassins, she caused the bishop to be murdered while engaged in his devotions, and his body to be buried on the spot<sup>1</sup>. A stable was built over the place, but the murder was before long discovered, and terrible vengeance followed in the speedy extinction of Geilana and the chieftain's family.

Leaving, however, this portion of the mission-field, which was afterwards visited by other and more successful evangelists, we may observe here that the self-denying labours of Columbanus and his disciples were not wholly lost even upon those Frankish Churches, whose criminal neglect of missionary work was so severely and so justly

<sup>1</sup> "Vestimenta quoque, cum quibus officia peragebant, sacrique libri simul cum eis defossa sunt, ne quod

indiciū necis eorum deprehendi posset." See Messingham, p. 328.



censured by Gregory the Great. They assembled in Synod, CHAP. VII.  
 in the year 613, and, acknowledging the claims of the A.D. 650.  
 heathen on their sympathy, appointed Eustasius, the succes- Eustasius,  
 sor of Columbanus, in the monastery of Luxeuil, director  
 of their mission, and sent him, with a monk named Agil<sup>1</sup>, Agil or St. Aile.  
 to labour in the district of Bavaria, which we have seen  
 hallowed by the saintly Severinus. About the middle of A.D. 650.  
 this century their labours were followed up by Emmeran, Emmeran.  
 a native of Poitiers, and a bishop of Aquitania. Roused  
 by the reports of the heathenism prevailing in Pannonia,  
 he resigned his see, and set out thither to preach the  
 gospel, accompanied by an interpreter well skilled in the  
 Teutonic dialects. On his way he halted at Ratisbon in  
 Bavaria, where he was forcibly detained by the duke  
 Theodo, who prevailed upon him, in consequence of the  
 disturbed state of Pannonia, to take up his abode there,  
 and more fully instruct his people, who as yet were scarcely  
 more than half reclaimed from heathenism. His stay  
 lasted a space of three years, and his labours are said to  
 have been blessed with considerable success; but they were  
 suddenly arrested by his death in 652, which took place A.D. 652.  
 during his journey to Rome, and was the result of a con-  
 spiracy on the part of the son of Theodo, to revenge the  
 violation of his sister, which was falsely ascribed to the  
 bishop<sup>2</sup>. His fleeting mission was succeeded, before the  
 close of the century, by that of Rupert, descended from a Rupert of Worms.  
 royal family among the Franks, and bishop of Worms. A.D. 696.  
 At the invitation of another Theodo, he too took up his  
 abode in Bavaria, and entered upon the work of reclaiming  
 the inhabitants<sup>3</sup>, multitudes of whom, since the death of

<sup>1</sup> For Agil, see Mabillon, *Acta SS. O. B.* sæc. II. f. 319, and for Eustasius, *Ibid.* sæc. II. 116—123.

<sup>2</sup> See the curious and improbable story in Canisius, *Lect. Antiq.* Vol. III. Neander, v. 53.

<sup>3</sup> See *Acta SS.* March 27. "At

first the wild mountaineers would not listen to him, and said that the God of the Christians was poor, or he would not let his worshippers suffer so much from want, and jealous, as he would not tolerate any other god besides himself; but they

CHAP. VII. A.D. 695—718. Emmeran, had relapsed into idolatry. With his companions whom he had brought with him, he went about from place to place, preaching, baptizing, and assailing the various strongholds of idolatry. The see of Ratisbon having been destroyed, he obtained from the duke the site of the city of Juvavium, still strewn with the remains of Roman temples and baths. He chose it because it was situated in an extensive and fertile valley on the slope of a high mountain-range, and far removed from the bustle of human life. Here he built a church, the foundation of what was afterwards the cathedral of Salzburg, and on a neighbouring eminence erected a convent, of which his niece Erentrudis, whom he had brought with twelve<sup>1</sup> fresh labourers from his former diocese, was the first abbess<sup>2</sup>. The Church of Salzburg soon became the parent of many others in Bavaria and Carinthia, and a missionary centre from which the light of Christian civilization was diffused over the neighbouring region.

speedily altered their opinion when they saw the mines and saltworks progressing under the direction of the saint." Menzel's *Germany*, I. 219.

<sup>1</sup> Their names are given in Mabillon, *Acta SS. Bened. sæc. III.* I. 329. "Giselarius, Dominus, Maternus, Dignulus, Chunaldus, Isenardus, Gerardus, Ariofridus, Vita-

lis, Ratharius, Erchanofridus, Erenfridus, et virgo Erentruda."

<sup>2</sup> In the same district laboured from A.D. 717—730, a Frankish hermit named Corbinian, who settled down in the district where afterwards sprung up the bishopric of Freisingen. See Mabillon, *O. B.* III. p. 471.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MISSIONARY EFFORTS IN FRIESLAND AND PARTS ADJACENT.

A.D. 628—719.

“Proposuit [Ecgherct] verbum Dei aliquibus eorum quæ nondum audierant gentibus evangelizando committere: quarum in Germania plurimas noverat esse nationes....sunt autem Fresones, Rugini, Danai, Hunni, Antiqui Saxones, Boructuarii.”—BEDE, v. 9.

WHILE the work was thus proceeding with more or less success in southern and central Germany, the more Northern regions were not entirely overlooked. Bordering on the kingdom of the Franks was the powerful tribe of the Frieslanders. Their authority extended not only over the strip of territory which still recalls their name, but a considerable portion also of the Netherlands and the adjacent districts. Between the Frankish kingdom and these outlying tribes, fierce and barbarous, and clinging to their native superstitions with fanatical tenacity, a series of border-wars were constantly maintained. Difficult and perilous as the task appeared, men were yet found to go forth and attempt their conversion, as often as the sword of the Frankish king seemed to open a way. Thus Aquitania sent into the field Amandus<sup>1</sup>, who was consecrated a missionary bishop about the year 628. He selected the country near the Scheldt as

CHAP. VIII.

*Missions in  
Frisia.*

A.D. 623.

<sup>1</sup> See Mabillon, *Acta Bened.* sæc. II. Contemporaneously with Amandus, Audomar (St Omer) from Lux-

euil, preached from the neighbourhood of Boulogne as far as the Scheldt. Böllinger, I. 85. Hardwick, p. 19 n.

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 623.

*Missionary  
efforts of  
St Amandus.**Displeasure  
of Dagobert.*

the centre of his operations, and at Ghent commenced his exhortations to the Frisian tribes to forsake their worship of trees and groves, and to adopt the Christian faith. His weapons, however, were not simply those of exhortation. He bore a commission from Dagobert, authorizing him, if it appeared necessary, to baptize the pagans by force, and to call in the aid of the Frankish soldiers in carrying on his work. The consequence, as might be expected, was violent hostilities, and a determination on the part of the Frisians to thwart his efforts. At length, in a wiser spirit, he endeavoured to win the affections of the rude warriors by redeeming captives, and educating them, and the impression thus made was still further strengthened by an incident which procured for him the reputation of a miracle-worker. He had vainly tried on one occasion to prevent the execution of a thief, and when the sentence was carried out he had the body taken down from the gibbet, and conveyed to his cell<sup>1</sup>. The restoration of the man to life through the efficacy, as it was believed, of the missionary's prayers, accomplished what the injunctions of Dagobert had proved unequal to effect. A considerable number of the Frisians came forward, submitted to baptism, and destroyed their temples, which Amandus was enabled to convert into churches and monasteries. But before long he was forced to suspend his labours in consequence of the displeasure of his patron, whom he had ventured to reprove for his polygamy and unbridled licentiousness. The latter, who had three wives at one time and innumerable concubines<sup>2</sup>, could not brook the interference of the bishop, and bade him depart from his kingdom. But before long the cloud passed away. The recall of Amandus to baptize the infant Sigebert was a sign of his restoration to favour, and he was enabled to carry on his work once more at Ghent. Though exposed to much hardship, and forced

<sup>1</sup> Robertson's *Ch. History*, Vol. II. p. 74.<sup>2</sup> Perry's *Franks*, p. 203.

to support himself by manual labour, his preaching was by no means ineffectual. Had he remained in the place where he had made a successful beginning he might have extended his sphere of action : but he was seized with an uncontrollable desire to attempt a useless mission among the savage Slavons of the Danube. The fruitless expedition of his patron against these tribes may have turned his thoughts in this direction<sup>1</sup>. But he was doomed to disappointment, and what was worse, to an indifference and ridicule, which defeated entirely the object of his ambition,—a martyr's crown. Returning to the region of the Scheldt, he was appointed, in the year 646, successor to a bishop of Mästricht, and thus acquired a permanent field of labour. Devoting himself with much diligence to the new sphere of usefulness thus opened to him, he visited all parts of his diocese, and exhorted his clergy to a faithful discharge of their duties. But his efforts to introduce disciplinary reforms brought upon him so much opposition, that he requested permission of the Pope, Martin I., to vacate his see, and though the latter bade him remain by his people, he withdrew from the scene of his labours, and spent the rest of his days in superintending the different monasteries he had established. Passing over the labours of the Irish missionary bishop Livinus<sup>2</sup>, who left his country with three companions and suffered martyrdom amongst the barbarous tribes of Brabant and Flanders, we may here notice those of another Frankish bishop, who appeared about twelve years later than Amandus, in an adjoining district. Eligius, or, as he is better known, St Eloy, was born at Chatelat, a village about a mile from Limoges, and was remarkable at an early age for excellence of character and genuine piety. Placed by his father Eucherius with a goldsmith at Limoges,

CHAP VIII.  
A.D. 623.

A.D. 646.

A.D. 646—651.

Livinus.

St Eloy.

<sup>1</sup> Perry's *Franks*, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> See *Annales Gaudenses*, Pertz, II. 186. "Anno vero 633 beatus Livinus, genere Scotus et Hybernie

archiepiscopus, cenobium Gaude cum tribus discipulis sibi et Deo dilectis decimo septimo Kalendas Augusti peregre initavit." Lanigan, II. 467.

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 640.

he soon displayed such skill as to attract the notice of Bobbo, the treasurer to Clotaire II., and the fidelity—rare in those days—with which he executed a commission of the king, won for him the favour of the court, and his appointment to the superintendence of the mint, which he retained under Dagobert<sup>1</sup>. Though surrounded by temptations, in the midst of a profligate court, he did not forget the Christian lessons he had learnt in childhood, but became eminent for the integrity of his life, for his kindness to the poor, and the interest he took in the relief and redemption of captives. In this latter sphere of charity his labours were unwearied. Whenever he heard that a slave was about to be put up for sale he hurried to the place and procured his redemption. Bands of twenty, thirty, and even fifty, according to his biographer, were thus liberated, and sometimes whole shiploads of slaves—Romans, Gauls, Britons, Moors, and especially Saxons from Germany—experienced the benefits of his kindness<sup>2</sup>. To rescue them from the hardships of the servile lot he stinted himself to the last farthing, and all who were willing to embrace the monastic life he assisted liberally, hoping to train them as missionaries amongst their own countrymen. So munificent was he in his charities that he was ever surrounded by a crowd of needy applicants for his bounty, and it became a common reply to any one inquiring for his house, “Wherever you see the largest crowd of paupers, there you may be sure to find Eligius.” He was equally earnest in erecting churches

*His kindness  
to captives and  
slaves.*

<sup>1</sup> See his Life (admodum prolixa) in Surius, *Acta SS.* Nov. 30. “Nam absque ulla fraude, vel unius etiam siliquæ immixtione, commissum sibi paravit opus: non ceterorum fraudulentiam sectans, non mordacis limæ fragmina culpans, non foci edacem flammam incusans, sed omnia fideliter complens, geminam meruit felix remunerationem.” c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> “Nonnunquam vero agmen in-

tegrum, et usque ad centum animas, cum navi egredierentur, utriusque sexus ex diversis gentibus venientes, pariter liberabat, Romanorum scilicet, Gallorum atque Britannorum, necnon et Maurorum: sed præcipue ex genere Saxonum, qui abunde eo tempore veluti greges—sedibus propriis evulsi in diversa distrahebantur.” *Vita*, c. 20. Dr Maitland's *Dark Ages*, pp. 101—39.

and monasteries. One of these his biographer describes at length, and we gain a vivid conception of the civilizing effects of such institutions at this period. Screened by a lofty mountain and a dense forest and surrounded by a moat, the gardens of the monastery were filled with flowers and fruit-trees of every kind, while a colony of monks employed the intervals of devotion in various kinds of handicraft, under the superintending eye of the skilful master of the royal mint<sup>1</sup>. Nothing shocked him more in his journeys from place to place than the sight of the bodies of malefactors hanging on gibbets and slowly rotting in the air. Wherever he saw such he always had them removed and decently interred. On one occasion his attendants had taken down the body of a man who had been hung that very morning, and were preparing a grave, when Eligius fancied he saw a quivering motion which gave sign of life not being quite extinct. He immediately used all his efforts to restore vitality, and was successful. "What a sin it would have been to have buried this man alive," was his simple remark to his followers, anxious to ascribe the man's restoration to miraculous agency; "let him be clothed, and rest awhile." It was with difficulty, however, that he rescued him from his accusers, who declaimed furiously against any mitigation of his punishment, and succeeded in obtaining his pardon from the king<sup>2</sup>.

In such works of charity, and the duties of the lower clerical office, he found ample employment, till his elevation, in the year 641, to the bishopric of Noyon<sup>3</sup> opened to him a still more direct and special sphere of usefulness. His diocese comprised the districts of Noyon, Vermondes, and Tournay, and was inhabited in great part by barbarous heathen tribes, who had never yet received the mes-

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 640.

*Various Philanthropic Efforts.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Eligii*, c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* c. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Not however before "sub cleri-

catus normula aliqua temporis curricula exegisset." *Vita*, lib. II. c. 2.

CHAP. VIII. sage of the Gospel. Here, in spite of imminent peril to  
 A.D. 641-659. himself, and amidst every hardship, he strove to win over by his consistent life and ceaseless self-devotion the savage hearts of his people. He founded churches and monasteries, and traversed his diocese in every part, proclaiming the Word to the people, and warning them against their idolatries.

*His sermons.* Fragments of some of his sermons have been preserved by his biographer, which are interesting as giving us an insight into the way in which, in the seventh century, a bishop like Eligius would provide for the spiritual wants of his people. In these, while, on the one hand, we find exhortations to a diligent cultivation of such Christian graces as love, faith, self-denial, purity and concord, to a careful attention to Christian ordinances, as prayer, attendance at church, hearing the Word, and the reception of the Lord's Supper, we find, on the other, exhortations to avoidance of all such heathen superstitions as were then rife in the country. In one sermon, after a persistent protest against the idea that men can win the favour of the Almighty by the mere performance of external ceremonies, the bishop proceeds, "It sufficeth not, my brethren, that ye be called Christians, if ye do not the works of a Christian. That man alone is benefited by the name of a Christian, who, with his whole heart, keeps the precepts and laws of Christ, who abstains from theft, from bearing false witness, from lying, from perjury, from adultery, from hatred of his fellow-man, from strife and discord. For these commands Christ Himself vouchsafed to give us in His Gospel, saying, 'Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother, and love thy neighbour as thyself; whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them, for this is the law and the prophets.' Nay, He adds

*Christian practice.*



stronger commands than these, for He says, 'Love your enemies: bless them that curse you: do good to them that hate you: pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you'.<sup>1</sup> Behold, this is a hard and difficult command, and seems impossible to men, but it has a great reward; for hear what He declares it is, 'That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.' O what grace is here! Of ourselves we are not worthy to be His servants, and yet by loving our enemies we become the sons of God. He then who wishes to be a Christian indeed must keep these commandments. He who keepeth them not deceiveth himself. He is a good Christian who putteth his trust not in amulets or devices of dæmons, but in Christ alone.

"But above all things, if ye would be Christians indeed, beware of resorting to any heathen customs, or consulting in any trial or difficulty soothsayers, fortune-tellers, or diviners<sup>2</sup>. He who doeth thus speedily loseth the grace of his baptism. Let there be amongst you no resorting to auguries or observance of the flight or singing of birds when ye set out on a journey. Rather when ye undertake a journey or any business sign yourselves in the name of Christ, repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer with faith and devotion, and no enemy will draw nigh to hurt you. No Christian will choose superstitiously a lucky day for going out or coming in, for all days are made by God<sup>3</sup>. No Christian will attend to the moon before commencing any undertaking, or on the first of January will join in

CHAP. VIII.  
A.D. 641—659.

*Avoidance of  
heathen super-  
stition.*

<sup>1</sup> St Matt. v. 44.

<sup>2</sup> In another place he tells his hearers, "mathematici spernendi, auguria horrescenda, somnia contemnenda... si quos cognoscitis vel occulte aliqua phylacteria exercere, expedit cum eis nec cibum sumere, nec quicquam habere commercii." II. c. 15.

<sup>3</sup> In another place this is still further expanded: "Nemo vel in ulia re minima diaboli sequatur adinventiones: nullus sive exiens, sive egrediens domum, observet quid sibi occurrat, vel num qua vox reciproca seu echo audiatur, aut quid aves garruant, vel quid sit quod portat si factus obviam." *Vita*, II. c. 15.

## CHAP. VIII.

A. D. 641—659.

*God and Na-  
ture.*

foolish and unseemly junketings and frivolity, or nocturnal revellings. Neither heaven, nor earth, nor stars, nor any other creature, is deserving of worship. God alone is to be adored, for He created and ordained all things. Heaven indeed is high, and the earth wide, and the stars passing fair, but far grander and fairer must He be who made all these things. For if the things that we see are so incomprehensible and past understanding, even the various fruits of the earth, and the beauty of the flowers, and the diverse kinds of animals in earth, air, and water, the instinct of the provident bee, the wind blowing where it listeth, the crash of the thunder, the changes of the seasons, the alternations of day and night; if these things that we see with our eyes cannot be comprehended by the mind of man, how shall we comprehend the things we do not see? Or what kind of Being must He be by whom all these things are created and sustained? Fear Him, my brethren, before all things, adore and love Him, cleave fast to His longsuffering, and never despair of His tender mercy."

In other sermons the bishop enlarges on the promises made by the Christian at his baptism, on the duty of remembering them in the course of daily life, on the true aspect and responsibility of life as a state of warfare against sin, and a preparation for the Great Day, when an account must be given for the deeds done in the body. On this latter topic the exhortations of the bishop are powerful in their reality and earnestness. "Let us reflect," he says, "what terror ours will be, when from heaven the Lord shall come to judge the world, before whom the elements shalt melt in a fervent heat, and heaven and earth shall tremble, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. Then while the trumpets of the angels sound, all men, good and evil, shall in a moment of time rise with the bodies they wore on earth, and be led before the tribunal of Christ; then shall all the tribes of the earth

*The Day of  
Judgment.*

mourn, while He points out to them the marks of the nails wherewith He was pierced for our iniquities, and shall speak unto them and say, ‘I formed thee, O man, of the dust of the earth; with my own hands I fashioned thee, and placed thee all undeserving in the delights of Paradise; but thou didst despise Me and my words, and didst prefer to follow the deceiver; for which thou wast justly condemned. But yet I did pity thee, I took upon Me thy flesh, I lived on earth amongst sinners, I endured reproach and stripes for thy sake; that I might rescue thee from punishment, I endured blows and to be spitted on; that I might restore to thee the bliss of Paradise, I drank vinegar mingled with gall. For thy sake was I crowned with thorns, and crucified, and pierced with the spear. For thy sake did I die, and was laid in the grave, and descended into Hades, that I might bring thee back to Paradise. Behold and see what I endured for thy sake! Behold the mark of the nails wherewith I was fixed to the Cross! I took upon Me thy sorrows, that I might heal thee. I took upon Me thy punishment, that I might crown thee with glory. I endured to die, that thou mightest live for ever. Though I was invisible, yet for thy sake I became incarnate. Though I knew no suffering, yet for thy sake I deigned to suffer. Though I was rich, yet for thy sake I became poor. But thou didst despise my lowliness and my precepts, thou didst obey a deceiver rather than Me. My justice, therefore, cannot pronounce any other sentence than such as thine own works deserve. Thou didst chose thine own ways, receive then thine own wages. Thou didst despise light, let darkness, then, be thy reward. Thou didst love death, depart, then, to perdition. Thou didst obey the Evil One, go, then, with him, into eternal punishment.’ ”

In the lips of the preacher these were no empty words. He lived in the constant realization of that awful Day

## CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 641—659.

*Later years of  
St Eloy.**His death.*

whose coming he thus vividly describes. His life was lightning, therefore could he make his words thunder. With unwearied activity he persevered in his self-denying labours till his seventieth year. Increasing weakness, at last, warned him that his end was near, and he spoke of it openly on one occasion, as he was walking in Noyon to a church with some of his younger clergy. Noticing a defect in the building which threatened its speedy fall, he sent for a workman to have it repaired. His companions suggested that the repairs should be deferred till such time as they could be completely carried out. "Let it be repaired now, my children," he said; "for if it is not done now, I shall never live to see it finished." To their expressions of sorrow at such a speedy loss of their friend and guide, he replied, that he had long felt the day of his departure was coming, and he would not be sorry to leave the world. Shortly afterwards worse symptoms appeared, but he still continued his labours of love, so far as he was able. He employed the last days of his life in solemnly charging his monastic brethren to remember their vows, and not to forsake the flock of Christ, but to labour diligently to carry on his work. When he felt that his hour was really come, clasping his hands in prayer, he said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart, according to thy word. Remember, O Lord, I am but dust, and enter not into judgment with thy servant. Remember me, O Thou that alone art free from sin, Christ the Saviour of the world. Lead me forth from the body of this death, and give me an entrance into thy heavenly kingdom. Thou who hast ever been my protector, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. I know that I do not deserve to behold Thy face, but Thou knowest how my hope was always in thy mercy, and my trust in thy faithfulness. Receive me, then, according to thy lovingkindness, and let me not be disappointed of my hope."

With these words he departed. In addition to the care of his own people, the good bishop had not been unmindful of the Frisians, whose extensive territory bordered on his diocese, and it was on the Frisian coast that one of the earliest Anglo-Saxon missionaries landed about twenty years after his death, to impart to his own countrymen the blessings he himself had received from Rome and from Iona. Eighty years had now elapsed since Augustine landed on the shores of Kent, little more than fifty since Paulinus preached the word at York, and Aidan opened his monastery at Lindisfarne. And now it was from Northumbria that the first of that numerous band went forth which soon began to rival the zeal of the Celtic monks in seeking the evangelization of their kinsmen according to the flesh. The last time we encountered Wilfrid, he was at the Synod of Whitby, aiding Agilbert in his controversy with the Scottish party. Since then he had seen strange vicissitudes of fortune, and was flying from what he deemed the tyranny of archbishop Theodore, determined to seek redress at Rome, when the ship in which he sailed was flung by a violent tempest on the coast of Friesland, in the year 678. He was hospitably received by the king Aldgis, and the natives, like those of Malta mentioned by St Luke, treated the shipwrecked crew with no little kindness, "though as yet," the biographer<sup>1</sup> of the bishop remarks, "they were firmly attached to their idolatrous superstitions." By way of repaying their kindness, the bishop preached the word to the people, and his exertions were rewarded by the conversion of the king, several of the chiefs, and some thousands of the people<sup>2</sup>. His coming was also believed to have improved the temporal fortunes of the people, who had

CHAP. VIII.

A. D. 659.

A. D. 678.

*Anglo-Saxon missionaries.*

*Wilfrid.*

A. D. 678—9.

*Preaches in Frisia.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Wilfridi Episcopi, Acta SS. Bened. sæc. III.*

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Fuller quaintly remarks that "as the nightingales sing the

sweetest when furthest from their nests, so Wilfrid did the best service to Christianity when furthest from home."

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 678—9.

previously been suffering from drought and bad seasons, and had hardly been able to obtain a livelihood. But with his coming the harvest improved, and the fishing was marvellously successful. The belief that these temporal advantages were the result of his coming, and of the faith which he preached, probably paved the way for its reception amongst the people<sup>1</sup>. But Wilfrid's stay was brief, and on the death of Aldgis, the heathen Radbod succeeded to the chieftaincy, and the pagan customs were restored. After an interval, however, of little more than ten years, another Northumbrian of noble birth was seized with a desire to preach the word in this district, and, though not able to carry out his designs in person, was the means of sending other labourers into the field. This was Ecgbert<sup>2</sup>, the same who afterwards persuaded the monks of Iona to adopt the Roman custom in the celebration of Easter. Like many of his fellow-countrymen, he had left his native land to study in retirement amongst the Irish schools, and had been received there with the wonted hospitality extended at this period to all such students. He took up his abode in a monastery which Colgan places in Connaught<sup>3</sup>, and became eminent for his learning and piety. Recovering from a severe illness, he made a vow that he would never return to his country, but devote

*Ecgbert.*

A.D. 690.

<sup>1</sup> "Erat autem ante adventum beati viri terra ipsa magne salsitatis magnæque sterilitatis. Verum ad prædicationem viri Dei eadem gente Fidem Domini suscipiente, sicut corda eorum supernæ dulcedinis rore ad fertilitatem operum bonorum mollita, et in habitatione Spiritus Sancti sunt accommodata facta; ita et terræ ipsorum salsitas in dulcedinem, sterilitas in fertilitatem, asperitas in mollitiem atque pinguedinem versa, omnibus inhabitantibus eam diversæ commoditatis copias lautissime intulit." *Vita S. Wilfridi, Acta SS. Bened.*

Eddius, cap. 25.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Chronicon Hyense* (Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 383) he is styled, "Eicbericht Christi miles." "Qui in Hibernia diutius exulaverat pro Christo, eratque et doctissimus in Scripturis et longæ vitæ perfectione eximius." Bede, III. 4.

<sup>3</sup> "In monasterio quod lingua Scottorum Rathmelsigi appellatur." Bede, III. 27. "Colgan (*Acta SS. Index voc. Rath-milsige*) places it in Connaught, but the exact situation remains to be identified." Reeves' *Adamnan*, p. 379.

himself to the service of the Lord. An opportunity before long appeared to present itself. The condition of the pagan nations in Northern Germany<sup>1</sup> was a subject of deep solicitude in Ecgbert's retreat, and he was filled with a desire to proclaim amongst them the Gospel; intending, if he failed in this, to go on a pilgrimage to Rome. But both his designs proved abortive. In spite of a vision bidding him remain and "instruct the monasteries of Columba," he selected the most zealous of his brethren, and made every preparation for the voyage. But on the eve of their embarkation a storm shattered the vessel which was to have conveyed the missionaries, and Ecgbert, recognizing the hand of Providence, returned to Ireland<sup>2</sup>. One of his companions, Wigbert, succeeded in reaching Frisia, but after two years of unceasing labour, finding himself utterly unable to make any impression on the people or Radbod their chief, he too returned to his Irish monastery and reported his ill-success to his abbot. The latter however was not willing thus to give up his project altogether. News of the successes of Pepin of Heristal in Frisia revived his hopes, and he began to seek for labourers who would carry out his wishes. His eye at last rested on Willibrord, a native of Northumbria, whose education commenced in Wilfrid's monastery at Ripon, had for twelve years been carried on under his own direction in Ireland<sup>3</sup>. He was now thirty-two years of age, and in Ecgbert's opinion possessed many qualifications for such an undertaking. Yielding to the solicitations of his abbot, he agreed to select eleven companions<sup>4</sup>, and try

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 690.

Willibrord.

A.D. 692.

<sup>1</sup> "Proposuit... aliquibus eorum quæ nondum audierant gentibus evangelizando committere... Sunt autem Fresones, Rugini, Dani, Hunni, antiqui Saxones, Boructuarii." Bede, v. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Bede, v. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Vita S. Willibrordi ap. Acta SS. Bened. sæc. III. p. 564. Bede, v. 10. Annales Xantenses, Pertz, II. 220.*

<sup>4</sup> Their names are given in Surius, *Mart. I.*; but the authenticity is plainly dubious.

CHAP. VIII. once more what could be effected. Pepin received the missionaries with joy, and gave them ample authority to commence their labours in that part of Friesland which he had lately wrested from Radbod and added to the Frankish territory.

A. D. 692.

*Labours in Frisia.*

Shortly afterwards, with that respect for the Roman Church which had now taken so firm a hold of the Anglo-Saxon mind, Willibrord repaired to the Eternal City, and sought the blessing of the Pope on his undertaking, as also a supply of relics to place in such temples as he might wish to purge from the leprosy of heathenism, and convert into Christian churches<sup>1</sup>. Successful in the object of his journey, he returned and entered upon his work, and shewed such zeal and devotion, and attained such satisfactory results, that at the expiration of four years Pepin sent him again to Rome, with the request that he might be elevated to the episcopal rank<sup>2</sup>. Sergius complied, and in the year 696 the Anglo-Saxon priest was consecrated under the name of Clemens<sup>3</sup>, and his seat as archbishop was fixed at Wilteburg, the Roman Trajectum<sup>4</sup>. Meanwhile one of his original companions, Suidbert, had been consecrated bishop in England, and commenced labouring in that capacity among the Boructuarians, whose territory lay between the Ems and the Yssel. His work however was speedily cut short by an irruption of the Saxons, and he was obliged to withdraw to the Lower Rhine, where Pepin made over to him the island of Kaisërworth for a monastery<sup>5</sup>.

A. . 696.

*Suidbert.*

A. D. 696.

Willibrord, on his return from Rome, established him-

<sup>1</sup> Bede, v. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Willibrordi, Acta SS. Bened.* III. *Annal. Xantenses*, A. D. 690. Pertz, II. 220.

<sup>3</sup> "Willibrordum Fresonum archiepiscopum consecrat, eique Clementi nomen tribuit." Jaffé, *Regest. Pont. Rom.* ann. 696.

<sup>4</sup> *Gesta Abbatum Fontanellensium*,

Pertz, II. 277. Bede, v. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Suidbert (also a Northumbrian) was consecrated by Wilfrid, who would naturally take an interest in the Frisian mission, in 693, "qui tunc forte patria pulsus in Mercionum regionibus exulabat." Bede, v. 11.



self at Wilteburg, and succeeded in evangelizing a considerable portion of Frankish Frisia, and building several churches and monasteries<sup>1</sup>, being assisted in carrying on his work by the brethren whom he had already brought over from Ireland, or who came out when they heard of the opening in the Frisian territory.

In the year 697, Radbod, the Frisian chief, sustained a severe defeat at the hands of Pepin<sup>2</sup>, and Willibrord endeavoured to win him over to the Christian faith. But though he would not oppose his preaching in his kingdom, he himself, like Penda in England, declined to listen to his overtures. Thereupon the archbishop determined to penetrate even into Denmark, but the terror inspired by Ongend, a ferocious Dane, rendered his efforts utterly unavailing. Contenting himself, therefore, with purchasing thirty boys<sup>3</sup>, whom he resolved to take back with him to Utrecht, and educate as future missionaries, he made sail homewards. On his return he very nearly lost his life on the island of Heligoland. So sacred was this island, which then went by the name of *Fositesland*, that it was forbidden to touch any animal living there, or, except in solemn silence, to drink of its holy well<sup>4</sup>. The archbishop, however, being flung upon its shores by a tempest, and having to wait some time for a fair wind, killed some of the sacred cattle to provide food for the crew, and baptized three men in the sacred spring. The natives, horror-struck

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 696.

*Willibrord in  
Fositesland.*

<sup>1</sup> Bede, v. 11. "Nam non multo post alios quoque illis in regionibus ipse constituit antistites ex eorum numero fratrum qui vel secum, vel post se illuc ad prædicandum venerunt."

<sup>2</sup> See Perry's *Franks*, p. 235. About 12 years after this we find the son of Pepin, Grimoald, marrying Theudelinda, daughter of the Frisian monarch.

<sup>3</sup> Alcuin, in his *Life of Willibrord*, tells us that "in eo ipso itinere

catechizatos eosdem pueros fonte salubri abluit, ne aliquid propter pericula longioris viæ, vel ex insidiis ferocissimorum illius terræ habitatorum damnum pateretur in illis; volens antiqui hostis prævenire insidias, et Domini sacramentis animas munire acquisitas." *Vita*, c. 9. Mabillon, *Act. Ben.* III. 566.

<sup>4</sup> Mabillon, *Act. Ben.* III. p. 566. Adam. Brem. *de Situ Danie.* Grimm, *D. M.* 210, 211.

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 696.

*Summoned before Radbod.*

at his audacity, expected the god would instantly vindicate his power by striking him with immediate death, or madness, and, when nothing ensued, they recounted what had occurred to Radbod. The latter summoned Willibrord into his presence, and decided that one of the offenders must die. Thrice were the lots cast before the victim could be determined<sup>1</sup>. At last one was taken and put to death to appease the wrath of the insulted Fosite<sup>2</sup>. The archbishop when he was asked by Radbod to explain his conduct, replied in terms which were certainly explicit: "It is not a god<sup>3</sup>," O king, "whom thou worshippingest, but a devil, who has seduced thee into fatal error. For there is no other but one God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are therein. He who worships this God with true faith shall receive eternal life. I am His servant, and I testify unto thee this day, that thou must abandon these dumb idols which thy fathers worshipped, and believe in One God Almighty, and be baptized in the fount of life, and wash away thy sins, and, abjuring thy iniquities, become henceforth a new man, and walk in newness of life. If thou dost, thou shalt enjoy eternal life with God and His saints, but if thou despisest me, and the way of salvation I declare unto thee, know assuredly that thou shalt suffer eternal punishment and everlasting fire with the Wicked One whom thou obeyest." The king, we are told, marvelled at the boldness of this speech, and acknowledging that the bishop's words corresponded with his deeds, sent him back with an honourable escort to Pepin. Encouraged by the protection of the latter, and of his successor Charles Martel, Willibrord now pushed forward his spiritual conquests, visited all parts of his diocese, and preached the word in every town

A.D. 714.

<sup>1</sup> Compare a similar occurrence in the life of Willehad, below, chap. x.

<sup>2</sup> He was a son of Baldr and Nanna, "he settles all quarrels, and

neither gods nor men know any better judgments than his." Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Mabillon, *Act. Bened.* III. p. 567.

and village that professed to have received the faith, CHAP. VIII.  
 adjuring them to stand fast and to glorify God by a con- A.D. 714.  
 sistent life. The consequence was that many more were  
 added to the numbers of the Church, and made over to  
 him grants of land on which to erect churches and monas-  
 teries<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile many Anglo-Saxons left their native  
 land, and eagerly associated themselves in the labours of  
 the archbishop, either in Frisia or the adjacent country<sup>2</sup>.  
 Among these were two brothers, named Ewald, distin- The brothers  
Ewald.  
 guished from one another by the colour of their hair<sup>3</sup>.  
 Selecting the territory of the Old Saxons, they made their  
 way thither, and in the first village they entered met with  
 a hospitable reception. Encouraged by this, they an-  
 nounced to their host that they wished to be led into the  
 presence of the ealdorman<sup>4</sup>, for whom they had a message A.D. 695.  
 of the utmost importance. The introduction was promised,  
 and they remained at the house of the reeve for some days.  
 Meanwhile their daily prayers, psalmody, and mysterious  
 rites, provoked the suspicions of the Saxons, and they were  
 afraid lest, if introduced into the presence of their chief,  
 they might prevail upon him to forsake his ancestral faith,  
 and draw away with him the whole tribe into apostasy.  
 They, therefore, one day fell upon them unexpectedly, and  
 put them to death. Ewald "the fair" was decapitated;  
 his brother was reserved for more cruel tortures, and was  
 hacked to pieces. But the ealdorman did not approve of

<sup>1</sup> Amongst these was the father of Liudger, Wursing, who with his family and relatives greatly aided the labours of the archbishop. *Acta S. Liudgeri*, Pertz, II. Though not a Christian, he is described as "defensor oppressorum, adjutor pauperum, in judicio quoque justus." Which virtues naturally provoked the hostility of Radbod, who expelled him from the country.

<sup>2</sup> See Perry's *Franks*, p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> Bede, v. 10. They also had been trained in Ireland. "Pro diversa capillorum specie unus Niger Hewald, alter Albus Hewald dicere-tur."

<sup>4</sup> "Non enim," writes Bede, "habent reges iidem antiqui Saxones, sed satrapas plurimos sue genti præpositos, qui, ingruente belli articulo, mittunt æqualiter sortes, et, quemcunque sors ostenderit, hunc tempore belli ducem omnes sequuntur."

CHAP. VIII. this cold-blooded murder. Considering that an insult had  
 A. D. 695. been offered to his authority, he slew all the inhabitants  
 of the village, and laid it in ashes. The bodies of the  
 brothers were dragged from the Rhine, into which they  
 had been flung, and were buried with much pomp at  
 Cologne by order of Pepin<sup>1</sup>. Another Anglo-Saxon simi-  
 larly distinguished by missionary zeal was Adelbert<sup>2</sup>, a  
 prince of the royal race of Northumbria, who selected  
 the north of Holland as the scene of his toils, and was  
 long held in veneration as their spiritual father by the in-  
 habitants of Egmond, where the missionary lived and  
 died. He was quickly followed by Werenfrid, who made  
 Elste his head-quarters, and thence propagated the Gospel  
 among the Batavi, dwelling on the island formed by the  
 Rhine and the Wahal. Plechelm, Otger, and Wiro, were  
 three other Anglo-Saxons<sup>3</sup> who laboured amongst the  
 people of Gueldres, and were highly favoured by Pepin.

The labours of Willibrord were further lightened by  
 the assistance of Wulfram bishop of Sens. The exact period  
 when he appeared in the Frisian mission-field is somewhat  
 doubtful, but it was the fame of the archbishop's success  
 which induced him to join him in the work and to share  
 his toils. His own elevation to the bishopric of Sens co-  
 incides with the year 690, and shortly afterwards he  
 applied to the abbot of Fontenelle for monks to accompany  
 him to Frisia<sup>4</sup>, and embarking on the Seine arrived in that  
 country, baptized a son of Radbod, and preached with  
 considerable success. Several incidents which occurred  
 during his sojourn in the country tended to make a con-  
 siderable impression on the minds of the people. Wulfram

<sup>1</sup> Bede, v. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Mabillon, *Acta Bened.* III. 586.

<sup>3</sup> See Lingard's *Anglo-Saxon Church*, II. 334.

<sup>4</sup> "Ad prælatum Fontinellæ Monasterium perveniens, de eodem loco cooperatores verbi strenuos et ad

prædicandum idoneos, utpote actione simul et eruditione præclaros assumens, ... in portu ejusdem monasterii navem ascendit." *Vita S. Wulframmi, Acta SS. Bened.* sæc. III. I. p. 342.

found them addicted<sup>1</sup> to the custom of immolating human beings in sacrifice to their gods. Some were hung on gibbets, others were strangled, others were drowned in the sea or the river. Once, on the occasion of a great festival, the bishop beheld a boy led forth for this purpose. The gallows had been erected, and a vast crowd had assembled in expectation of the scene. The bishop expostulated with Radbod on the cruelty of such practices, and implored him to let the boy's life be spared. Radbod replied that his request could not be granted, the lot had been cast and had marked out the boy as the selected victim, and the Frisian law required that he must suffer. Still the bishop persisted in interceding for his life, and at last, with a sneer the chiefs who stood round Radbod said, "If your Christ can rescue this boy from death, he may be His servant and yours for ever." Thereupon he was placed under the beam, and thrown off in the sight of a vast concourse of Christians and heathens. Wulfram meanwhile, so his biographer records, threw himself on his knees, and prayed that if it was God's will, He would glorify His name by saving the boy's life. His prayer was no sooner ended than the rope broke and the victim fell to the ground. Wulfram hurried to the spot, and finding life not yet extinct, took measures for recovering him from the swoon into which he had fallen. The people ascribed this result to miracle, and the fame of the bishop spread abroad in all directions. The boy, together with others whom he had similarly saved from a cruel death, were sent to Fontenelle to be educated in his monastery<sup>2</sup>. On another occasion the two sons of a widow woman, one seven the other five years of

CHAP. VIII.

A. D. 695—719.

*Human  
Sacrifices.*

<sup>1</sup> "Mos pessimus prædicto incredulorum duci inerat ut corpora hominum damnatorum in suorum solemnibus deorum, sæpissime diversis litaret modis; quosdam videlicet gladiatorum animadversionibus interimens, alios patibulis appendens, aliis

laqueis acerbissime vitam extorquens; præterea et alios marinorum sive aquarum fluctibus instinctu diabolico submergebant." *Vita S. Wulframmi*. Mabillon, *Acta Ord. Bened.* III. 344.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Wulframmi*, *Acta SS. Bened.* sæc. III. I. 344.

CHAP. VIII.

A. D. 695—719.

*Two Children  
saved from  
death.*

age, were selected after casting lots for sacrifice to the gods. A stake was erected on the sea-shore, to which the boys were fastened, and they were left to the mercy of the rising tide, in a spot where two seas met. As the tide crept nearer, the elder of the two children tried by supporting the other on his shoulders to save him for a time from his too certain doom. Amidst the vast crowd that had flocked to the shore to witness the cruel spectacle one heart alone was touched. The bishop went boldly into the presence of Radbod, and begged the life of the children, declaring it iniquitous that beings made in the image of God should be exposed to the sport of dæmons. "If your God Christ," Radbod replied, "will deliver them from their present peril, you may have them for your own." Thereupon the bishop prayed mightily to God, and, as the story runs, the waves seemed suddenly to gather into a heap and leave the spot where the children stood, so that it became as dry land. Then the bishop flung himself into the waves, and seizing one of the children in his right hand and the other in his left, conveyed them safe to land and restored them to their mother. They were afterwards baptized, together with a considerable number of the Frisians<sup>1</sup>.

*Effect on the  
Frisians.*

It is easy to imagine that incidents like these would make a strong impression upon the people; and it is not surprising that the missionary's expostulations won the respect of many who must in their inmost hearts have revolted from such cruel scenes. Even Radbod's son consented, as we have already said, to receive baptism<sup>2</sup>, and that cruel chief himself at one period entertained serious thoughts of following his example. He even approached the baptismal font, but stopped on the way to ask the

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Wulframmi, Acta SS. Bened.* sec. III. I. 344, 5.

<sup>2</sup> For other indications of Rad-

bod's better feelings, especially during the last days of his life, see *Vita S. Liudgeri*, Pertz, II. 405.

bishop, "adjuring him to tell the truth," whether if he received the rite, he might hope to meet in heaven his Frisian ancestors, or whether they were in that place of torment of which he had been told<sup>1</sup>. "Do not deceive thyself," was the prelate's uncompromising reply; "in the presence of God assuredly is the ordained number of his elect; as for thy ancestors the chiefs of Frisia who have departed this life without baptism, it is certain that they have received the just sentence of damnation." Thereupon Radbod drew back from the font, and declined to receive the rite, preferring, he said, to join his own people, wherever they might be, rather than sit down in the kingdom of heaven with a handful of beggars<sup>2</sup>: and as yet he could not assent to these new doctrines, and preferred to remain constant to the belief of his own people. The obstinacy of the chief perplexed the bishop not a little. A last effort to overcome his scruples appears to have been made while Radbod was confined to his bed by the disease which eventually terminated in his death. But this also was frustrated by an incident which is too curiously illustrative of the ideas of the times to be omitted. "One day," writes the biographer of Wulfram, "while Radbod was lying sick, the Evil One, who is sometimes permitted to transform

<sup>1</sup> "Juramentis eum per nomen Domini astringens." Neander (v. 60) remarks, "that this characteristic incident, though the chronicle cannot be entirely depended on, may nevertheless be true... The barbarous chief, was, doubtless, only seeking a pretext to reject, in a half faltering way, the proposal that he should embrace Christianity; still this incident may serve to illustrate how the spread of Christianity was hindered and checked by the narrow and tangled views of its doctrines which had grown up out of the ordinances of the Church." Rettberg and Ozanam consider the whole story an invention devised in behalf of the rigid predestinarian

doctrine. The circumstance is mentioned in the *Annales Xantenses* as occurring in the year 718, as also Radbod's death in the next year 719. Pertz, II. 221.

<sup>2</sup> "Hæc audiens Dux incredulus, nam ad fontem processerat, infelix pedem a fonte retraxit, dicens non se carere posse consortio prædecessorum suorum Principum Fresionum, et cum parvo numero pauperum residere in illo cælesti regno: quin potius non facile posse nobis dictis adsensum præbere, sed potius perman-surum se in his quæ multo tempore cum omni Fresionum gente servaverat." *Vita S. Wulframmi*, c. 9.

CHAP. VIII.

A.D. 719.

himself into an angel of light, appeared to him, crowned with a golden diadem, studded with brilliant gems, and arrayed in a robe spangled with gold<sup>1</sup>. While the chief trembled with astonishment, his visitor asked him reproachfully, 'Tell me, who has so seduced thee, that thou wishest to give up the worship of thy gods, and the religion of thy ancestors? be not deceived, continue constant to the faith thou hast been taught, and thou shalt assuredly sit down in the golden mansions of bliss, which I have appointed for thee in the world to come. And now that thou mayest know the truth of my words, go to-morrow to that Bishop Wulfram, and ask of him where is that mansion of eternal splendour which he promises thee if thou wilt receive the Christian faith; and when he fails to show it thee, then let two messengers, one of each faith, be sent, and I will lead the way, and show them the mansion of eternal glory, which I am about to give to thee hereafter.' In the morning, Radbod did as he was bid, and told Wulfram of the vision. But the latter was not to be duped: 'This is an illusion of the devil,' said he, 'who wishes all men to perish, and none to be saved. But be not thou deceived, hasten to the font, believe in Christ, and receive the remission of thy sins. As for the golden mansions which thy visitor has promised thee, believe him not, for he it is that seduceth the whole world; by his pride he fell from his place in heaven, and from a beneficent angel became the enemy of mankind.' Radbod replied that he was willing to be baptized, but he should like first to see the mansion which his own deity had promised him. Thereupon Wulfram sent the messenger, his own deacon, and a heathen Frisian. They had not gone

<sup>1</sup> Radbod's illness is also mentioned in the *Vita S. Lindgeri*, Pertz, II. 405, "sex annis continuis ante diem mortis suæ paulatim traxit dolorem, cœ-

pitque regnum ejus deficere, regnum quoque Francorum augmentando proficere."



far before they met one in human form, who said to them, CHAP. VIII.  
'Make haste, for I am about to show you the glorious A.D. 719.  
abode which his god has prepared for prince Radbod.' The messengers followed their guide, and after a long journey they came to a street paved with different kinds of marble, at the end of which was a golden house of marvellous beauty and splendour; entering it, they beheld a throne of immense size, and their guide addressing them, said, 'This is the mansion, and glorious palace, which his god has promised to bestow on prince Radbod after his death.' The deacon, astonished at the sight, made the sign of the Cross, and replied, 'If these things have been made by Almighty God, they will remain for ever, but if they be the work of the devil, they will speedily vanish.' He had no sooner spoken these words, than their guide was instantly changed into the form of the Prince of darkness, and the golden palace into mud; and the messengers found themselves in the midst of a huge morass, filled with reeds and rushes. A tedious journey of three days brought them back to Wulfram, and they recounted what had befallen them." But they returned too late for their intelligence to be of any avail to the pagan chief, by assuring him that he had been deceived by the Prince of darkness. Before their arrival he had paid the debt of nature without receiving baptism, because, in the words of Wulfram's biographer, "he was not of the sheep of Christ, nor ordained unto eternal life." But the news of this marvellous occurrence made a deep impression on the Frisians. Multitudes of them agreed to receive the rite which their chief had scorned, and gladdened the heart of Wulfram by, at least, a nominal profession of Christianity, before his death in the following year<sup>1</sup>. On the death of Radbod, Charles Martel A.D. 720.

<sup>1</sup> This is the year given by Mabillon and in the *Annales Xantenses*

(Pertz, II. 221): others say that he lived till 741.

CHAP. VIII. once more reduced the Frisians to a state of nominal sub-  
A.D. 720. jection, and Willibrord was enabled to push forward his missionary operations with greater hope of permanent success. But he had been already joined by a still more eminent fellow-labourer, whose success speedily eclipsed his own, and who won for himself the name of the "Apostle of Germany." His labours must form the subject of our next Chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ST BONIFACE AND THE CONVERSION OF GERMANY.

A. D. 715—755.

“E stirpe natus regia Bonifacius,  
Britanniam ultro deserens,  
Auctoritate pontificis summi, fuit  
Apostolus Germaniæ.”

UP to this time the propagation of Christianity in Germany had been effected not so much by general organized plans, as by the voluntary activity of individuals. Between the various missionaries, whether Irish or Anglo-Saxon, there had been little union or concert, nor had anything like a general supervision of the different fields of labour been possible<sup>1</sup>. The vast Teutonic pagan world had as yet been but partially assailed. Enthusiastic monks from Ireland had erected many outposts of civilization on its borders, and Wilfrid and Willibrord had shown what might be effected when Teutons were Apostles of Teutons. But no one had yet appeared to conduct the great work on one definite plan, to consolidate the various missionary bodies, to lead them forth under one banner, and to encounter German idolatry in its strongholds. This work was reserved for an Anglo-Saxon, the well-known Winfrid, or, as he was afterwards called, Boniface<sup>2</sup>, “the father of Christian civilization in Germany.”

CHAP. IX.

*Partial character of the results hitherto attained.*

<sup>1</sup> Gieseler, II. 214.

<sup>2</sup> This name was probably assumed when he became a monk. Bugga, writing to him in 720, calls him

“‘Bonifacio’ sive Winfrido dignissimo Dei presbytero.” *Ep.* III. Migne, *Script. Eccles. sæc. VIII.* p. 690. Lingard’s *A. S. C.* II. 338.

## CHAP. IX.

A.D. 680.

*Winfred, or  
Boniface.**Birth and Edu-  
cati n.*

Born at Crediton, or Kirton, in Devonshire, about the year 680, of an old and noble family, he was designed by his parents for a secular career. But at an early period the visit of some monks quickened the desire to embrace the monastic life. The opposition of his father was diverted by the alarm of a dangerous illness, and the boy was removed, when only seven years of age, to a conventual house at Exeter [Adestancastre] under Abbot Wolfard, and thence to Nutescelle in Hampshire, a monastery in the diocese of Winchester, afterwards destroyed by the Danes. Here, under abbot Winberct, he became eminent for his diligence and devotion, for his deep acquaintance with the Scriptures, and skill in preaching. At the age of thirty he received ordination, and his well-known talents procured for him on several occasions high ecclesiastical employments. King Ina honoured him with his confidence, and the united recommendations of his brethren led to his being sent, on more than one occasion, on a confidential mission to archbishop Bertchtwald. He might, therefore, have risen to an honourable position in his native land, but at an early period he had conceived an earnest desire to join the noble band headed by Willibrord, for the success of whose labours in Frisia many a prayer was doubtless put up in the English monasteries. He communicated to his abbot the earnest desire he felt to preach the Gospel to "his kinsmen after the flesh," and though the latter would have dissuaded him from his intention, he repaired to London<sup>1</sup>, and thence, with three of the brethren whom he had persuaded to accompany him, crossed the sea to Doerstadt<sup>2</sup>. He had hoped to labour successfully in Friesland, but the time of his coming was unpropitious. Radbod was at war

A.D. 715.

*Intellectual effort  
in Friesland.*

<sup>1</sup> "Pervenit ad locum ubi erat forum rerum venalium, et usque hodie antiquo Anglorum Saxonumque vocabulo appellatur *Lundenwick*." *Vita S. Bonifacii*, Pertz, II. 338.

<sup>2</sup> "Then a flourishing emporium, now almost obliterated from the map, nay even from historical memory." Palgrave's *Normandy*, I. 257.

with Charles Martel, a fierce persecution of the Christians had broken out, and Winfrid was fain to return to his cloister at Nutescelle. CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 715.

During the ensuing winter the abbot died, and, had Winfrid listened to the solicitations of his brethren, he might have been welcomed as his successor. But the old missionary ardour still burnt fiercely, and with the return of spring he had made up his mind to make another effort in Frisia. Daniel bishop of Winchester favoured his design, and gave him commendatory letters to the Pope, whose consent and patronage he determined to secure before entering on his second enterprize. Accordingly the year 718 saw him again in London, whence he embarked, and quickly reached the coast of Normandy. In the autumn he set out, in company with a large body of pilgrims, through France, offering up fervent prayers in all the most celebrated churches that he might have a successful journey across the Alps, and escape the many dangers to which it was incident. Reaching Rome in safety, he delivered to the Pope, Gregory II., the commendatory letters of his diocesan, and unfolded his design. Gregory gave the ardent monk a hearty welcome, and during the winter discussed with him in frequent interviews the prospects of the mission, and finally gave him a letter authorizing him to preach the Gospel in Germany wherever he might find an opportunity. A.D. 718.  
*Journey to Rome.*  
A.D. 719,  
*Jaſſé.*

In the following spring, therefore, armed with this commission, and an ample supply of relics, he set out to make a second effort to propagate the faith. Thuringia was the scene of his earliest labours. Here and in the district already partially evangelized by Rupert of Worms, he endeavoured to induce the clergy to adopt a more rigid form of celibacy, and to reclaim the people who had relapsed in too many instances into idolatry. While thus employed, he received intelligence of the death of Radbod, *Second visit to Frisia.*

and immediately repaired to the country of that chieftain. The recent successes of Charles Martel had opened a way for the Gospel into the Frisian kingdom, and for three years Winfrid united himself with the missionary band under Willibrord at Utrecht, and in the destruction of many heathen temples, and the rise of Christian churches, saw many encouraging fruits of his labours. Willibrord now feeling the advance of age, was extremely anxious that the energetic monk of Nutescelle should be his successor in the see of Utrecht. But Winfrid firmly declined the honour. In vain the other pleaded and intreated. Winfrid declared that he was not fifty years old, the canonical age for a bishop. When that objection was overruled, he fell back upon his commission from the Pope. It directed him to preach the Gospel in Germany, and to Germany he would go. Willibrord was, therefore, constrained to give way, and Winfrid left him to plunge into the wilds of Hessa. Two native chiefs were attracted by his preaching, and were baptized. A monastery arose at Amöneburg on the Ohun, and the missionary found that the protection of the converted chiefs, and his own acquaintance with the native language, gained for him an access to the hearts of many in Hessa and Saxony. Multitudes followed the example of their chiefs, and accepted baptism. A faithful brother, named Binna, was deputed to announce to Gregory these gratifying results, and the Pope, who could not fail to foresee what might be expected from the labours of so energetic a missionary, summoned him to Rome.

*Second visit to Rome.*

A. D. 723,  
*Jan'y.*

Thither Winfrid obediently repaired, escorted by a numerous retinue of Franks and Burgundians, and, in reply to the Pope's questions respecting the faith which he preached, handed in a copy of his Creed. It was duly examined, and after an interval of five days he was again admitted to an audience, and was informed by Gregory that he was completely satisfied, and, in consideration of

the success he had already achieved, was ready to confer upon him the episcopal dignity. Accordingly on the feast of St Andrew, 723, he was consecrated regionary bishop. No particular diocese was, of course, assigned him, but he was entrusted with a general jurisdiction over all whom he might win over from paganism to the Christian fold. Gregory further supplied him with a book of Canons to aid him in the general government of his mission<sup>1</sup>, and a Synodal containing instructions for his own personal conduct. At the same time, to cement still closer the bond of union between them, he exacted from the susceptible and conscientious Anglo-Saxon, over the grave of St Peter, the oath which had long been required of bishops within the patriarchate of Rome<sup>2</sup>, whereby he solemnly pledged himself to render all ecclesiastical obedience to the Holy See. "I vow to thee," it ran, "the first of the Apostles, to thy vicar, Pope Gregory, and his successors, that, with God's help, I will continue in the unity of the Catholic faith, and in no wise will consent to aught which is contrary to the unity of the same, but will, in all ways, persevere in keeping my pure faith, in communion with thee, and in close adherence to the usages of thy Church, which has received from God the power to bind and to loose; and so I promise to thy Vicar and his successors. And if I at any time learn that the conduct of any ministers of the Church is opposed to the ancient ordinances of the fathers, I will hold no intercourse or communion with them, but will rather hinder their proceedings to the best of my power, and wherever I cannot restrain them,

CHAP. IX

A.D. 723.

*Consecrated regionary Bishop.*

*The oath of obedience to the Holy See.*

<sup>1</sup> See Migne's *Patrologia*, sec. VIII. p. 502. The rules have regard (1) to the qualifications of those Boniface was to admit to holy orders, (2) the times of administering orders (non nisi quarti, septimi, et decimi mensis junii, sed et in ingressu quadragesimali), (3) the seasons for

celebrating baptism (non nisi in Paschali Festivitate et Pentecoste...exceptis iis quibus mortis urgente periculo, ne in aeternum pereant, talibus oportet remediis subvenire), (4) the income of the Church.

<sup>2</sup> Migne, sec. VIII. p. 498. Gieseler, II. 215. Neander, v. 66.

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 723.

will give information thereof to the Pope." It has been pointed out by Guizot, that the political circumstances of the times would naturally render Gregory anxious to obtain such a vow of allegiance from one in whose hands there was a prospect of the development of a great Germanic Church<sup>1</sup>; and we shall see, again and again, how scrupulously conscientious Winfrid, now to be known by the name of Boniface, was in carrying out his instructions. Thus elevated to the episcopal dignity, with letters of commendation to the Mayor of the Frankish palace, to the bishops of Bavaria and Alemannia, and the native chiefs of the countries where he was about to labour, the missionary recrossed the Alps, exhibited his instructions to Charles Martel, and with his permission and full protection recommenced operations in Hessa.

*Returns to  
Hessia.*

A.D. 724.  
*Relapse during  
his absence.*

He found that matters had not improved during his absence. Some of his converts had remained firm in the faith they had been taught by him, but the majority, still fascinated by the spell of their old superstitions, had blended the new and the old creed in a wild confusion. They still worshipped groves and fountains, still consulted augurs and cast lots, still offered sacrifice on the old altars<sup>2</sup>. Boniface saw that he must take strenuous measures to convince them of the vanity of their old belief. A letter he received about this time from his old friend the bishop of Winchester would have suggested caution in dealing with the primitive superstitions. That prelate, now blind and far advanced in years, had not forgotten the energetic monk he had known in the cloister of Nutselle, and he now offered him some advice on the way he ought to promote the knowledge of the Gospel. Writing to one

<sup>1</sup> Guizot's *History of Civilization*,  
II. 174, 330. (E. T.)

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Bonifacii*, cap. 8. "Alii  
lignis et fontibus alii autem aperte

sacrificabant. Alii aruspicia et divinationes, præstigia atque incantationes occulte, alii manifeste exercebant."



labouring in the Teutonic mission-field, and doubtless himself well knowing the glamour of Teutonic superstitions, he inculcates delicacy in dealing with the idolatries of their mutual kinsmen. He would have the missionary scrupulously avoid all contemptuous and violent language, he would have him try above all things to cultivate a spirit of patience and moderation. In preference to open controversy, he suggests that Boniface should put such questions, from time to time, as would tend to suggest the contradictions which the old Teutonic creed involved, especially on the subject of the genealogy of the gods. Useful and wise as was such advice in reference to his general conduct, Boniface deemed that the present juncture required sterner and more uncompromising measures.

Near Giesmar, in upper Hesse, stood an ancient oak, sacred for ages to Donar or Thor, the God of Thunder. By the people of Hesse it was regarded with peculiar reverence, as the rallying-point of the "tings" or assemblies of the whole tribe. Again and again had Boniface declaimed against such gross veneration for "the stock of a tree;" but his sermons had fallen dead on the ears of his hearers. He determined, therefore, to strike a blow at the object of so much superstition, and to remove a constant stumblingblock from the midst of his converts. One day, accompanied by all his clergy, he advanced, axe in hand, to cut down the offending monarch of the forest. The people assembled in thousands to witness the great controversy between the new and the old belief, many enraged at the interference of the strange preacher, many more confident, like the people of Fositesland, that an instant judgment would strike down so daring an offender. But scarcely had the missionary begun to ply his axe than it was apparent that Thor could not defend his own. If he was a god, he was, certainly, either "gone on a journey," or "was asleep and needed awaking;" for in vain

CHAP. IX.

A.D. 724.

*Advice of Daniel  
bishop of Winchester.*

*The Sacred Oak  
of Giesmar.*

CHAP. IX.

A.D. 723.

his votaries supplicated his vengeance. After a few blows of the axe a crashing was heard in the topmost boughs, a mighty rushing wind, says the Chronicler, seemed to shake every branch, and then the leafy idol came down to the ground, and split into four quarters. "The Lord He is the God!" the people shouted, acknowledging the superior might of the new faith, nor did they interfere, when Boniface, as a testimony to the completeness of his victory, directed that an oratory, in honour of St Peter, should be constructed out of the remains of their old divinity. The work now proceeded with vigour, and was prosecuted by the bishop with unflagging energy for a space of ten years. Numbers in Hesse and Thuringia were baptized, heathen temples disappeared, humble churches rose amid the waste forest-lands overspread with oaks; monastic cells sprung up wherever salubrity of soil, and especially the presence of running water, suggested a healthy site; the land was cleared and brought under the plough; the sound of prayer and praise awoke unwonted echoes in the forest-glades, and the simple lives of Boniface's little band of missionaries won the hearts of the rude but hardy tribes.

A.D. 723-730.

"The harvest truly was plenteous, but the labourers were few." Boniface determined to invite assistance from his native land<sup>1</sup>. In a circular letter, therefore, which he addressed about this time to the bishops, clergy, and principal abbots in England, he painted in lively colours the wants of his German converts. "We beseech you," he writes, "that ye will remember us in your prayers, that we may be delivered from the snares of Satan, and from the crafts of wicked men, and that the word of God may have free course and be glorified. Pray for us, and pray to God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who would have all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, that He will vouchsafe to convert to the true faith the hearts

*Aid from England.*

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. xxxvi. Migne, Patrologia, sæc. VIII. p. 755.*

of the pagan Saxons, that they may be delivered from those bonds of the Evil One, wherewith they are held captive. Have compassion on them, brethren. They often say, 'We are of one blood\*with our brothers in England.' Have pity on them, your kinsmen according to the flesh, and remember that the time for working is short, for the end of all things is at hand, and death cannot praise God, nor can any give Him thanks in the pit. Aid us, then, while yet it is day." The appeal was not ineffectual<sup>1</sup>. Not a few flocked from England to rally round the devoted missionary, and even devout women were found willing to sacrifice the pleasures and comforts of their homes in their native land, and go forth to found or fill the convents which Boniface soon began to inaugurate. "As iron sharpeneth iron," so the countenances of friends from the old country refreshed and invigorated the spirits of the good bishop. By their united efforts a great impression was made amongst the people of Saxony and Thuringia, and numbers were added to the Church. In such results much was doubtless superficial; still the day of small things is never to be despised, least of all in estimating the issues of missionary labour. The suppression, wherever practicable, of idolatrous worship, the destruction with unsparing vigour of its outward monuments, must at least have tended to loosen the hold of old superstitions on the native mind. To believe in the power of Thor or Woden, when their most sacred oaks were suffered to fall with impunity, was hardly possible, especially while the

<sup>1</sup> Amongst those who thus came forth, besides others mentioned below, was Wigberct, who left the monastery of Glastonbury to join Boniface at some period between the years 733 and 738. Amongst the letters of Boniface is preserved one from Wigberct to the brethren at Glastonbury announcing his safe arrival "in confinio paganorum Hæ-

sonum ac Saxonum," and that "nos-ter archiepiscopus Bonifacius, cum adventum nostrum audiisset, per semetipsum dignatus est longâ viâ in obviam nos venire ac suscipere valde benigne." *Ep. LXX.* ed. Migne. He was stationed at Fritzlar, where he educated the abbot Sturm. Mabilon, *Acta SS. Ben.* III. 625.

CHAP. IX.

A. D. 723—730.

*Support of  
Charles Martel.*

victories of Charles Martel were opening up, day by day, more and more of the old pagan territory to the light of Christian civilization. Whatever others may have done after him, Boniface may claim the merit of having abstained from employing the assistance of the Mayor of the Palace, in *compelling* the people to resort to baptism. Without that assistance, as he himself allows<sup>1</sup>, his work would have been wellnigh impossible, but it was confined within strictly legitimate limits. It enabled the bishop to correct the irregularities of his own clergy, to put down the celebration of heathen rites, at least in public; it legalized the establishment of Christian forms of worship; it protected the monasteries as they rose in the forest wastes; but beyond this it can scarcely with fairness be said to have extended. Boniface knew of other and more effectual weapons for winning over the hearts of the people to the Christian faith, than those which a system of compulsory conversion would have dictated. His monasteries were not only seminaries of sound learning, but industrial and agricultural schools, where the rude native of Thuringia or Saxony could learn many of the primary and most useful arts of life. The native missionaries, whom the bishop sent forth from these establishments, when duly trained and educated, may not have learnt much beyond the most elementary truths, still what they knew they endeavoured to practise. They had been taught themselves to repeat in the native tongue the form of renunciation at baptism and the confession of sins; they could explain to the people, at least in some measure, the nature of the rite, and were directed to suffer none to act as godfather or godmother but such as could repeat the Creed and the Lord's Prayer<sup>2</sup>. In

<sup>1</sup> "Sine patrocinio principis Francorum nec populum regere, nec presbyteros vel diaconos, monachos vel ancillas Dei defendere possum, nec ipsos paganorum ritus et sacrilegia

idolorum in Germania, sine illius mandato et timore, prohibere valeo." *Ep.* XII. Migne, p. 702.

<sup>2</sup> See Neander, v. 73.

the bishop himself they learnt to respect one who was an ardent student of the Scriptures, and indefatigable in expounding them to the people. In the correspondence he kept up with many old friends in England, we find him begging again and again for copies of different portions of the Divine Word. Thus to the abbess Eadburga he writes, to request her to send him the Epistles of St Peter inscribed in gilded letters, that he might use them in preaching; to Cuthbert he writes for copies written in a good clear hand suitable for his weak eyes, as also for commentaries, among which he particularly specifies that of the Venerable Bede<sup>1</sup>. Thus by his own unwearied exertions, aided by devoted disciples, a new empire was won to the Christian faith, and he went on not despising the day of small things, but quietly availing himself of every opportunity to carry out the great object of his life.

Meanwhile news arrived of the death of Gregory II. Still anxious to maintain his connection with the Holy See, Boniface wrote to Gregory's successor, and besought his blessing on his labours, and in the fall of a metropolitan received a marked recognition of his work. Not content with a distant correspondence<sup>2</sup>, he once more crossed the Alps in

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 723—730.

*Death of Gregory.*

A.D. 731.

*Boniface's third visit to Rome.*

<sup>1</sup> See especially *Epp.* XIX. XXXVII. XL.

<sup>2</sup> For this correspondence see Migne, sæc. VIII. p. 576. Gregory III.

1. Congratulates the bishop on the success of his missionary efforts.
2. Sends him the pall ("Dum missarum solemniam agis, vel episcopum te contigerit consecrare, illo tantummodo tempore eo utaris").
3. Empowers him to consecrate bishops ("ubi multitudo crevit fidelium.....pia tamen contemplatione ut non viles-cat dignitas episcopatus").
4. Directs (amongst other things)

(a) "Quos a paganis baptizatos esse asseruisti (Odic baptism?) si ita habetur, ut denuo baptizes in nomine sanctæ Trinitatis mandamus."

(b) "Inter cetera agrestem caballum aliquantos comedere adjunxisti, plerosque et domesticum. Hoc nequam fieri deinceps sines, sed quibus potueris Christo juvante modis per omnia compesce, et dignam eis impone poenitentiam: im-mundum est enim atque execrabile."

(c) As to prayers for the dead, "nonnisi pro mortuis ca-

CHAP. IX.

A.D. 738.

the year 738, with a numerous retinue of Franks, Burgundians, and Anglo-Saxons, and sought a personal interview with Gregory III. The latter received him with more than ordinary respect. He invested him with plenary powers as legate of the Apostolic See, and authorized him to visit and organize the Bavarian Church. With letters accrediting him in his new capacity, Boniface returned in the following spring, and, after a short stay at Ticina with Luitprand king of the Lombards, commenced a thorough visitation of the diocese of Bavaria, and, with the consent of Odilo, added to the solitary see of Passau those of Salzburg, Freisingen, and Ratisbon<sup>1</sup>.

Wunibald.

Willibald.

A.D. 742-746.

While at Rome the archbishop had learnt that his kinsman Wunibald<sup>2</sup> had come thither from England, and that another kinsman, Willibald, had returned from the Holy Land, and entered the monastery of Monte Cassino. From the former he had exacted a promise to follow him into the great Teutonic mission-field, and had requested Gregory to induce the latter to leave his monastic retreat, and come out to him on the same errand. The two brothers accordingly joined him in the year 740, and Boniface rejoiced in the addition of such welcome aid. Wunibald was consecrated priest, and received the care of seven churches in the newly-converted Thuringia. Willibald<sup>3</sup> was stationed at Eichstadt, then a waste forest-land, which Count Suiger of Hirsberg had bestowed upon the Church. One humble church only existed in the wild and woody district, but the newly-returned pilgrim from Jerusalem en-

tholicis memoriam faciat  
presbyter et intercedat."

- (d) "Rebaptizari jubet eos, qui  
'a presbytero Jovimactante  
et carnes immolatitias ves-  
cente' baptizati sint."

- (e) "De parricidarum pœnis  
addit, in quorum numero  
vult eos quoque haberi qui

infidelibus ad immolan-  
dum paganis sua renudent  
mancipia."

<sup>1</sup> On the work in Bavaria see  
above, p. 156 n.

<sup>2</sup> Mabillon, *Act. SS. III. Part II.*  
176.

<sup>3</sup> Mabillon, *III. Part II. 367.*

tered with ardour on his work, and proved himself no unworthy coadjutor of his great relative<sup>1</sup>. But before long from Wimburn Minster in Dorsetshire came forth another relative of the bishop, and the little family circle of devoted missionaries was complete. Boniface had written to Tetta, abbess of Wimburn, requesting that Walpurga<sup>2</sup>, Wunibald's sister, as well as any other of his countrywomen as should be willing, might be sent out to share the work in Germany. Walpurga did not shrink from the perils of the enterprise. With thirty companions, amongst whom were Lioba and Thecla, she crossed the sea, and after a joyful meeting with the archbishop proceeded to join her brother Wunibald in Thuringia, and settled for a time in a convent beside him there. Afterwards she accompanied him to Heidenheim in the wilds of Suevia, where they built a church, and after much difficulty, a double monastery for monks and nuns. The companions also of Walpurga before long presided over similar sisterhoods. Thus Lioba<sup>3</sup> was stationed at Bischofsheim on the Tuber, Thecla at Kitzingen in Franconia, Chunichild, another devout sister, in Thuringia, and Chunitrude in Bavaria. It was not always easy to reconcile the natives to the erection of these outposts of civilization in their midst. Many deemed it a profanation of the majestic silence of the old oak-groves, and an insult to the elves and fairies who for untold ages had haunted the primæval solitudes. Many more regarded with much suspicion this intrusion on the old hunting-grounds, and would have preferred that the peace of the wolf and bear should not be disturbed.

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 740—746.

*Walpurga.*

*Lioba.*

*Thecla.*

*Chunichild.  
Chunitrude.*

<sup>1</sup> Boniface ordained him priest, and shortly afterwards bishop of Eichstadt, which see he held for upwards of forty years, till A.D. 786. One of the lives of St Boniface is ascribed to him.

<sup>2</sup> Mabillon, *Act. SS. Ben.* III. II.

261. She died in 779 or 780.

<sup>3</sup> Or Lioba, see Surius, Sept. 28. Mabillon, *Act. SS. Ben.* III. II. 221. She was afterwards the friend of Hillegard, consort of Charlemagne, who owed much to her conversation and example.

CHAP. IX. But as years rolled on, the peaceful lives of the mysterious  
 A. D. 740-746. strangers won their respect, and the sight of waving corn-  
 fields reconciled them to the change.

A. D. 741.

*Death of  
Charles Martel.*

But we are anticipating events. In the year 741 Charles Martel died, and Boniface now saw further opportunities opened up for carrying on and consolidating the labours of the various missionary bands. It is true that the great Mayor of the Palace never thwarted his operations, or declined to recognise his authority, but he tolerated many of the clergy whose lives by no means corresponded with their sacred profession, and the gratitude due to the conqueror at Poitiers was somewhat marred by his practice of occasionally pillaging churches and monasteries when he wanted money for his numerous wars. Now that he was dead, the way was clear. Exerting unbounded influence over Carloman and Pepin, Boniface could, without let or hindrance, develop his plans for organizing the German Church. He began by founding four new bishoprics in Hesse and Thuringia, Würzburg, Eichstädt, Bamberg, and Erfurt, and in the following year, proceeded to revive the decayed Synodal system, by calling a council composed of ecclesiastics and the national estates, to make provision for the moral and spiritual superintendence of the newly-formed churches. Eighty years had elapsed since a synod had been summoned, at least in Austrasian France; it was now resolved that they should meet every year. Boniface, as legate of the Pope, was entrusted with plenary power, but the decrees of the Councils were set forth by the Frankish kings in their own name.

*Revival of the  
Synodal sys-  
tem.*

In the Council of 743 many regulations were passed for the better government, not only of the new Germanic Churches, but of the Frankish Church also<sup>1</sup>. The jurisdiction of Boniface over the other bishops was duly confirmed;

<sup>1</sup> One of the decrees of this Council (A.D. 742) marks an era in the

history of the rise of the Papal power. "Pelagius II." remarks Hallam



the clergy were enjoined to observe strict celibacy, and forbidden to carry arms, to serve in war, to hunt, or to hawk; they were directed to render all due obedience to the bishop of their respective dioceses, to receive him with due homage at his visitation, and to render a faithful account of the welfare of their several parishes; in co-operation with their bishops they were further directed to use every means in their power to suppress all heathen and superstitious practices, such as sacrifices of men or animals at funerals, impure festivals in honour of heathen deities, worshipping of groves, trees, and springs, all recourse to amulets, incantations, soothsaying, all endeavours to penetrate the secrets of the past or the future by auguries from birds, or horses, or oxen, or casting lots.

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 741.  
*Regulations  
passed in the  
Synod.*

Besides legislating thus generally for the welfare of the Church, the archbishop was now able to deal more directly with ecclesiastics whose views or practices incurred his suspicion. Some of these belonged to the Scotch and Irish Churches, scattered up and down the country, whose peculiar views as to the limitation of episcopal rights, the celibacy of the clergy, and the supremacy of the Great bishop of the West, were naturally obnoxious to the archbishop. Others, again, were men whose lives were directly contrary to their profession. Like wolves in sheep's clothing they made the faith a cloak for licentiousness, and sometimes went so far as to join the natives in their heathen sacrifices. To such we are well content the archbishop should have given place "no not for an hour;"

A.D. 745.  
*Ecclesiastical  
discipline.*

(*Middle Ages*, I. 522), "had, about 560, sent a pallium to the bishop of Arles, perpetual vicar of the Roman see in Gaul, and Gregory I. had made a similar present to other metropolitans. But it never was supposed that they were obliged to wait for this favour before they received consecration until this Council..... It was here enacted, that, as a token

*of their willing subjection to the see of Rome, all metropolitans should request the pallium at the hands of the Pope, and obey his lawful commands. This was construed by the Popes to mean a promise of obedience before receiving the pall, which was changed in after times by Gregory VII. into an oath of fealty." See Ep. Bon. Zachariæ, LXXV.*

they, if any, would be sure to undermine his work, and to cause the Christian name to be disgraced among the heathen. While Charles Martel was alive, Boniface had hardly known how to conduct himself towards such unworthy members of the sacred order, when he encountered them in the royal palace.

Mindful of his oath of fealty to the Pope, he had at an early period consulted his friend Daniel, bishop of Winchester, on the subject. The latter suggested caution, and, if necessary, a little prudent dissimulation. This did not satisfy the conscientious missionary. He opened his heart to Gregory II. and sought from him a resolution of his doubts. The successor of St Peter suggested that he should sharply rebuke such clergy as openly disgraced the dignity of their profession, but counselled caution before proceeding to extremities, and hinted that severity often failed of its object, while kindness and patient expostulation were more likely to succeed. Now, however, he could take higher ground, and could resort to severer discipline.

The names of three ecclesiastics have been more especially preserved to us, who for erroneous teaching rather than scandalous lives were made to feel the authority of the Papal legate. One of these<sup>1</sup>, Adelbert, was of Frankish descent; his errors formed the subject of much correspondence between the archbishop and Pope Zacharias. To define exactly in what they consisted at this distance of time is not easy<sup>2</sup>. According to the allegations of Boni-

<sup>1</sup> Boniface, *Epp.* LVIII. Neander, v. 78. Kurtz, 506.

<sup>2</sup> "Domos multorum penetravit," writes the archbishop, "...multitudinem rusticorum seduxit, dicentium quod ipse esset vir apostolicæ sanctitatis et signa atque prodigia faceret:" and he continues, "designatur in aliqujus honore apostolorum vel mar-

tyrum ecclesias consecrare, improperans hominibus etiam cur tantopere studerent sanctorum apostolorum limina visitare. Postea, quod absurdum est, in proprii nominis honore dedicavit oratoria; vel, ut verius dicam, sordidavit. Fecit quoque cruciculas et oratoriola in campis, et ad fontes, vel ubicunque sibi visum

face, he had put himself at the head of some fanatical partizans who regarded him as a man of Apostolic holiness and a worker of miracles. Puffed up with pride, he compared himself with the Apostles of Christ, erected oratories in honour of his own name, and placed crosses and little chapels by the side of wells and in open fields, where the merits of "holy Adelbert" were invoked, to the great scandal of true Saints. Moreover, he had suffered parings of his nails, and locks of his hair, to be carried about as of equal honour with the relics of St Peter; and when the people flung themselves at his feet to confess their sins, he replied, "I know all your sins, for all secrets are revealed to me; ye need not confess them, they are forgiven, return to your homes in peace." The other ecclesiastic was Clemens, an Irishman by birth<sup>1</sup>, who incurred the archbishop's suspicions on account of his loose opinions respecting the unity of the Catholic Church, his very partial reverence for the decisions of the Fathers, his refusal to acknowledge the vows of celibacy, and his novel opinions as to the doctrine of predestination and the Saviour's descent into Hades<sup>2</sup>. Whatever may be the merits of the controversy, Clemens and Adelbert felt the weight of Synodal censure, though it does not appear to have diminished their popularity. The third troubler of the peace of Boniface was the famous Feargil, or Virgilius<sup>3</sup>, "the Geometer," who with one Sidonius was labouring in Bavaria. He offended the archbishop by refusing to rebaptize certain persons, as the latter

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 745.

Clemens.

Feargil or Virgilius.

fuit, et jussit ibi publicas orationes celebrari donec multitudines populorum, spretis cæteris episcopis, et dimissis antiquis ecclesiis, in talibus locis conventus celebrarent dicentes: Merita sancti Adelberti adjuvabunt nos." *Ep.* LVII.

<sup>1</sup> "Genere Scotus est." *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> "Dicens quod Christus Filius Dei, descendens ad inferos, omnes quos inferni carcer detinuit inde liberavit, credulos et incredulos, lauda-

tores Dei simul et cultores idolorum." *Ep.* LVII.

<sup>3</sup> Vit. Mabillon, *Acta SS. Ben.* III. 280. Lanigan's *Church History of Ireland*, III. 179. He had been abbot of Aghabo in Ireland: he arrived in France in 746, and won the peculiar esteem of Pepin. Other Irish missionaries in Germany at this time were *Dobda*, placed as a bishop at Chiem in Upper Bavaria by duke Odilo (Lanigan, III. 188); *Alto*, who

CHAP. IX.

A. D. 745.

directed, because the officiating priest, who was utterly ignorant of Latin, had used instead of the proper formula the words, "Baptizo te in nomine *Patria, Filia, et Spiritu Sancta.*" But Zacharias, on the appeal of Virgilius, pronounced the baptism perfectly valid, inasmuch as the mistake arose not from heretical pravity but from mere ignorance of grammar. Three years afterwards when Virgilius was nominated to the see of Salzburg, Boniface again wrote to the Pope to complain that the bishop-designate perversely taught "that there was another world, and other men below the earth, with a sun and moon of its own." Whether the archbishop's opposition arose from horror at the idea of the antipodes, or because he understood Virgilius to teach the existence of a distinct race of mankind, not descended from Adam, is uncertain. Zacharias summoned the bishop-designate to Rome, where he not only cleared himself of any heretical imputation, but as bishop of Salzburg lived to carry the Gospel with much success into the wilds of Carinthia.

*Letter of Boniface to Zacharias.*

But we must not misunderstand the simple-minded Boniface. He could rebuke not only obscure ecclesiastics, but, when occasion demanded, even the Vicar of Christ himself. In a letter<sup>1</sup>, couched in no truckling terms, he rebukes Pope Zacharias for allowing the honour of the pall to be purchased with money, and for suffering numerous scandals to good and pious pilgrims to exist in the city of Rome. His rude German disciples told him strange tales of the superstitious practices which were enacted, even under the shadow of St Peter, on the first of January; how the women hung amulets round their arms, and bought and sold them openly in the shops. Of what avail was it for

arrived in Bavaria about 743, and founded the monastery consecrated by Boniface, of *Altmunster* (*Act. SS. Ben.* ad. ann. 743); *Declan*, a missionary in Bavaria, who died at Frisen-

gen, *Sidonius* (Latinized from *Sed-na*), a companion of Virgilius. *Lanigan*, III. 181.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. XLIX.*

Boniface to preach against heathen superstitions in Germany if they were permitted at Rome? In his reply the Pontiff promised an examination of these causes of complaint, and the suppression of the abuses.

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 745.

To return, however, to his own sphere of labour, the death of the bishop of Cologne in the year 744, suggested to Boniface the idea of elevating that place to be his Metropolitan See, especially as it might be made the basis of more extended missions in Friesland, where, since the death of Willibrord in 739, the work had somewhat retrograded. While corresponding on the subject with the Holy See, an event occurred which gave an entirely different turn to the negotiations, and illustrates one of the flagrant abuses of the clerical office, against which he had been endeavouring to legislate. In the year 744 Gerold, bishop of Mentz, was slain in a warlike expedition against the Saxons<sup>1</sup>. To console his son Gewillieb for the loss of his father he was consecrated as his successor, though until now he had been only a layman in Carloman's court, and had displayed more than ordinary fondness for the chase. In the following year Carloman headed another expedition against the Saxons, and Gewillieb followed in his train. The armies encamped on either side of the river Wiseraha, and, unmindful of his sacred office, Gewillieb sent a page to inquire the name of the chief who had slain his father. On discovering it, he sent the same messenger a second time to request the chief to meet him in friendly conference in the midst of the stream. The latter complied, and the two rode into the water, and, during the conference, the bishop stabbed the Saxon to the heart.

*Gerold and Gewillieb.*

This act of treachery was the signal for a general engagement, in which Carloman gained a decisive victory over the Saxons. Gewillieb returned to his diocese as

<sup>1</sup> Othloni *Vita Bonif.* cap. xxxvii.

though nothing had occurred. But Boniface could not allow so flagrant an infraction of the Canons enacted in the recent Synod to pass unrebuked. In the Council, therefore, of the following year, he made a formal charge against the blood-stained bishop, and demanded his deposition<sup>1</sup>. Gewillieb found himself unable to struggle against the authority of the archbishop; the see of Mentz was declared vacant, and became the seat of Boniface as Metropolitan, whence he exercised jurisdiction over the dioceses of Mentz, Worms, Spires, Tongres, Cologne, Utrecht, as well as the nations he had won over to the Christian faith<sup>2</sup>.

*Correspondence  
with Zacharias  
about his suc-  
cessor.*

In the letter wherein Boniface communicated to the Pope this alteration in his plans, he made a request more nearly related to himself. He was now verging on three-score years and ten, and his long and incessant labours had begun to tell upon his constitution. Weighed down with "the care of all the churches" of Germany, he longed for repose, or at least for some diminution of the burden which pressed upon him. He had already requested that he might be allowed to nominate and ordain his successor in the archiepiscopal office. This the Pope had assured him could not be, but he conceded to his age and infirmities the unusual permission to select a priest as his special assistant, who might share a portion of his episcopal duties, and, if he proved himself worthy of confidence, might be nominated as his successor. Increasing infirmities now induced him to reiterate his request. The Pope in reply urged<sup>3</sup> him not to leave his see at Mentz, and reminded him of the words of the Saviour, "He that persevereth unto the end, the same shall be saved;" but in consideration of his long and laborious life, he agreed that if

<sup>1</sup> "Ad hæc objiciens propriis oculis se perspexisse illum cum avibus canibusque jocantem, quod episcopo nullatenus liceret." Othloni *Vita*,

c. xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* xiv. Zachariæ. Migne, p. 954. A.D. 751. Jaffè.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep.* xi. Migne. A.D. 748. Jaffè.

the archbishop could find amongst his clergy one in whom he could place implicit confidence as fit to be intrusted with the office, he might elevate him thereto, and receive his assistance as his colleague and representative. Successful in obtaining this welcome concession, Boniface nominated his fellow-countryman and disciple Lull as archbishop of Mentz. For himself, he proposed to retire to a monastery which was now rising in the midst of the vast forest of Buchow<sup>1</sup>, on the banks of the river Fulda. Of the origin of this celebrated monastery we shall speak in the following chapter. Suffice it to say here, that it was one of the most important of the many similar institutions which had risen under the archbishop's eye. It occupied a central position in reference to missionary operations. Round it the four nations to whom he had preached the word for so many years seemed to be grouped together<sup>2</sup>, and here the aged prelate could employ the autumn of his life in directing the labours of the brethren, and watching the beneficial and civilizing results of their exertions amidst the surrounding country. But while thus forming his plans for promoting the good work in the land of his adoption, he was not forgetful of old friends in England. Pleasant memories of Crediton and Nutescelle still lay near his heart, and though his arduous duties forbade a visit to these familiar scenes, he yet maintained a constant correspondence with friends in the old country, and rejoiced to receive tidings of the welfare of the Anglo-Saxon Churches, just as he was pained to the heart when he heard of any moral declension. On such occasions he deemed it his duty to write to the offenders, and exhort them to amend their lives. Thus hearing that Ethelbald

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 748.

A.D. 751.

*Boniface desires  
to retire to  
Fulda.*

<sup>1</sup> Founded in 744, under the eye of Boniface.

<sup>2</sup> "Quatuor enim populi, quibus verbum Christi per gratiam Dei diximus, in circuitu hujus loci habitare

dignoscuntur. Quibus cum vestra intercessione, quamdiu vivo vel sapio, utilis esse possum." *Ep. Bon.* LXXV.

CHAP. IX.

A. D. 751.

king of Mercia lived in the practice of gross immorality, he wrote to him in stirring and earnest terms<sup>1</sup>, and remonstrated with him on the bad example he was setting his subjects, and endeavoured to shame him into a more consistent life by contrasting his conduct with that of the still pagan Saxons around him in the Teutonic forests, who, though "they had not the law" of Christianity, yet "did by nature the things contained in the law," and testified by severe punishments their abhorrence of unchastity. He also wrote to Archbishop Cuthbert<sup>2</sup>, informed him of the canons and regulations he had inaugurated in the recent Synods, and urged him to use all possible means to promote the vitality of the Church of their native land.

*Anxiety for his Churches.*

Thus amidst increasing infirmities and many causes for anxiety he yet found time to remember old scenes and old friends. But as years rolled on, the conviction was deepened in his own mind that the day could not be far off when he must leave the Churches he had founded. Lull had, indeed, been ordained, conformably to the Pope's permission, as his coadjutor in the see of Mentz, but his appointment had not as yet received the royal recognition, and till this was secured, Boniface could not feel free from anxiety for the welfare of his flock. One of his last letters, therefore, was addressed to Fuldrede, chamberlain of the Frankish court, soliciting his protection and that of his royal master in behalf of his clergy and his many ecclesiastical foundations. In this very year he had been called upon to restore upwards of thirty churches in his extensive diocese, which had been swept away in an invasion of the heathen Frisians, and it was with gloomy forebodings that he contemplated the fate of the German Church, if it was not shielded by royal protection. "Nearly all my companions," he writes to Fuldrede, "are strangers in this land; some are priests, distributed in various places to

A. D. 752.

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* LXII. A. D. 745.

<sup>2</sup> *Ep.* LXIII. A. D. 745.



celebrate the offices of the Church and minister to the people; some are monks, living in their different monasteries, employed in teaching the young; some are aged men, who have long borne with me the burden and heat of the day. For these I am full of anxiety, lest after my death they should be scattered as sheep having no shepherd. Let them have a share of your countenance and protection, that they may not be dispersed abroad, and that the people dwelling on the heathen borders may not lose the law of Christ. Suffer also my son and brother in the ministry, the Archbishop Lull, to preside over the Churches, that both priests and people may find in him a teacher and a guide. And may God grant that he may be a true pastor to his people, a true director to the monastic brethren. I have many reasons for making this request. My clergy on the heathen borders are in deep poverty. Bread they can obtain for themselves, but clothing they cannot find here, unless they receive aid from some other quarter, to enable them to persevere and endure their daily hardships. Let me know either by the bearers of this letter, or under thine own hand, whether thou canst promise the granting of my request, that, whether I live or die, I may have some assurance for the future<sup>1</sup>." The royal permission recognising Lull as his successor arrived, and now he could look forward to his end in peace. If ever he had wished to close his life in the peaceful seclusion of his new monastery at Fulda, that was not his desire now. Though upwards of seventy-four years of age, he determined to make one last effort to win over the still pagan portion of Friesland, and to accomplish what Willibrord and Wilfrid had begun. Bidding, therefore, the new archbishop a solemn farewell, he ordered preparations to be made for the journey. Something told him he should never return, and, therefore, he desired that with his books,

CHAP. IX.

A.D. 752.

*Letter to Fulda.*

A.D. 754.

*Last effort in Friesland.*

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. LXXII. Migne, p. 779.*

CHAP. IX.

A.D. 755.

*Arrival in  
Friesland.*

amongst which was a treatise of Ambrose on *The Advantage of Death*, might be packed not only the relics which were his constant companions, but also his shroud. Then with a small retinue of three priests, three deacons, four monks and forty-one laymen, he embarked on board a vessel, and sailed along the banks of the Rhine till he reached the shore of the Zuyder Zee. In Friesland he was joined by Eoban, an old pupil, whom he had advanced to the see of Utrecht. Together they penetrated into East-Friesland, and commenced their labours. For a time all went well. The missionaries were welcomed by some of the tribes, and were enabled to lay the foundations of several churches<sup>1</sup>. Gladdened by the accession of many converts, they at length reached the banks of the river Bordaui, not far from the modern Dockingen. It was the month of June, and the festival of Whitsunday drew near. Boniface had dismissed many who had been admitted to baptism, bidding them return on the vigil of Whitsunday to receive the further rite of confirmation. On the morning of the appointed day, the fifth of June, the archbishop could hear the noise of the advancing multitude. But when he looked out from his tent, the brandishing of spears and the clang of arms told only too plainly that they were coming for a very different purpose than that for which he had summoned them. The heathen tribes, enraged at the success of the daring missionary, had selected this day for a complete revenge. Some of the archbishop's retinue counselled resistance, and were already preparing to defend themselves, when he stepped forth from his tent and gave orders that no weapon should be uplifted, but that all should await the crown of martyrdom. "Let us not return evil for evil," said he: "the long-expected day has come, and the time of our departure is at hand. Strengthen ye yourselves in the Lord, and He will redeem your souls.

*Martyrdom of  
Boniface.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Bonifacii*, Pertz, II. 349. Migne, *Patrologia*, sæc. VIII. 662.

Be not afraid of those who can only kill the body, but put your trust in God, who will speedily give you His eternal reward, and an entrance into His heavenly kingdom.”

CHAP. IX.  
A.D. 755.

Calmed by his words, his followers bravely awaited the onset of their enemies. They were not long kept in suspense. Naturally embittered against the opponents of their ancestral faith, the heathens rushed upon them, and quickly dispatched the little company, whom their leader had forbidden to lift a weapon in self-defence. Boniface, according to a tradition<sup>1</sup> preserved by a priest of Utrecht, when he saw that his hour was come, took a volume of the Gospels, and making it a pillow for his head, stretched forth his neck for the fatal blow, and in a few moments received his release. The heathens speedily ransacked the tents of the missionaries, but instead of the treasures they expected, found only the book-cases which Boniface had brought with him; these they rifled, scattering some of the volumes over the plain, and hiding others amongst the marshes, where they remained till they were recovered by the Christians, and removed to the monastery of Fulda, together with the remains of the great missionary.

Thus at the ripe age of seventy-five<sup>2</sup> died the father of German Christian civilization. A Teuton by language and kindred, he had been the Apostle of Teutons, and his work had not been in vain. The Church, in which he had been trained, was not like those of Ireland, Gaul, or Spain, the sister and equal of that of Rome<sup>3</sup>. It looked back to the day when forty monks, with Augustine at their head, landed on the shores of Kent, and no Church regarded with more filial affection the source of her light and life<sup>4</sup>. What Mecca is to the Arabian pilgrim, that to the Anglo-Saxon was the city where the fair-haired Saxon boys were first seen

<sup>1</sup> *Vita Bonifacii*, Pertz, II. 351 n.

<sup>2</sup> On the date of Boniface's death see Mabillon, *Act. SS. Ben.* ad ann. 755. On the removal of his remains,

*Vita S. Sturmii*, Pertz, II. 372.

<sup>3</sup> Michelet's *History of France*, I. 73. Guizot's *Civilisation*, II. 174.

<sup>4</sup> See *Ep.* XI. Zachariæ. Migne, 943.

by the large-hearted monk of St Andrew. And nowhere do we find a more signal instance of the reverential feelings with which his countrymen regarded the great Bishop of the West than in the life of the native of Crediton. Combining singular conscientiousness with earnest piety, dauntless zeal with practical energy, he had been enabled to consolidate the work of earlier Irish and Anglo-Saxon missionaries; he had revived the decaying energies of the Frankish Church; he had restored to her the long dormant activity of the Ecclesiastical Council; he had covered Central and Western Germany with the first necessary elements of civilisation. Monastic seminaries, as Amöneburg and Ohrdruf, Fritzlar and Fulda, had risen amidst the Teutonic forests. The sees of Salzburg and Freisingen, of Regensburg and Passau testified to his care of the Church of Bavaria; the see of Erfurt told of labours in Thuringia, that of Buraburg, in Hesse, that of Wurzburg, in Franconia, while his metropolitan see at Mentz, having jurisdiction over Worms and Spire, Tongres, Cologne, and Utrecht, was a sign that even before his death the German Church had already advanced beyond its first missionary stage. Well may Germany look back with gratitude to the holy Benedictine, and tell with joy the story of the monk of Nutescelle. The roll of missionary heroes, since the days of the Apostles, can point to few more glorious names, to none, perhaps, that has added to the dominion of the Gospel, regions of greater extent or value, or that has exerted a more powerful influence on the history of the human race. In the monastery of Fulda was exposed for ages, to hosts of pilgrims, the blood-stained copy of St Ambrose on the *Advantage of Death*, which the archbishop had brought with his shroud, to the shore of the Zuyder Zee, and the long-continued labours of many of his loving pupils and associates will prove that in his case, as always, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

## CHAPTER X.

### EFFORTS OF THE DISCIPLES OF ST BONIFACE.

A.D. 719—789.

“Itaque Willehadus et Liudgerus contemplativæ vitæ operam dabant, adprime orantes pro gente Saxonum, ne jactum in eis semen verbi Dei inimicus homo zizaniiis oppleret, impletumque in eis esset, quod Scriptura dicit, *Multum valet deprecatio justî assidua.*”—ADAMUS BREMENSIS.

DURING one of his earlier missionary journeys in Thuringia and Hessa<sup>1</sup>, Boniface arrived on one occasion, in the year A.D. 719, at a nunnery near the city of Triers, on the banks of the Moselle, presided over by the Abbess Adula. After service, the abbess and her guest repaired to the common hall, and, as was usually the case, a portion of Scripture was read during meal-time. The reader was Gregory, nephew of the abbess, a lad of fifteen who had lately returned from school. Boniface was pleased with the way in which the boy read his Latin Vulgate, and proceeded to inquire whether he understood the passage he had read. The boy, misunderstanding his question, read it a second time. “No, my son,” replied the missionary, “that is not what I meant. I know you can read well enough, but can you render the passage into your own mother-tongue?” The boy confessed his inability, and thereupon Boniface himself translated it into

CHAP. X.

A.D. 719.

*Disciples of  
Boniface.*

<sup>1</sup>. *Gregory of  
Utrecht.*

<sup>1</sup> See *Acta SS. Bolland.* Aug. 25.

## CHAP. X.

A. D. 719.

*Discourse of  
of Boniface.*

German, and then made the passage the ground of a few words of exhortation to the whole company.

We know neither what the passage was, nor what the missionary said, but we do know what was uppermost in his mind, and can easily imagine that he did not lose the opportunity of exhorting the inmates of the safe and secluded cloister, to prize the blessing they enjoyed in the knowledge of a Saviour's love, and told them of the many thousands in the forests of Northern and Western Germany, bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh, who knew not the truth, and to whom it was his privilege to proclaim the word of life. We know, also, what was the effect of his earnest words. So deep was the impression made on the mind of the listening youth, that he was seized with an unconquerable desire to accompany the preacher in his arduous journeys. In vain the abbeſs tried to dissuade him from entrusting himself to an entire stranger. Nothing daunted, the boy persisted in his request, till at length the abbeſs was fain to consent.

*Gregory at-  
taches himself  
to Boniface.*

Supplying him, therefore, with horses and attendants, she suffered him to depart and accompany his new-found friend. That friend he never forsook. He shared with him all his trials and dangers, and, in spite of poverty<sup>1</sup> and privations of the most discouraging character, he continued his constant companion wherever he went. He was with him when he went to Rome to obtain the approbation of the Pope as a missionary in Thuringia, and brought back from the Holy City many copies of the Scriptures<sup>2</sup>, in which, as his master's chief assistant, he taught the

<sup>1</sup> "In fame, et nuditate, et laboribus multis. In tanta paupertate invenerunt populum illum, ut vix ibi ullus haberet unde viveret, nisi de longinquo parum quid colligeret, ut ad modicum tempus sustentaret penuriam suam." *Acta SS.* Aug. 25.

<sup>2</sup> "Plura volumina sanctarum Scripturarum, largiente Domino,

illic acquisivit, et secum inde ad profectum proprium, discipulorumque suorum, non modico labore advexit domum. Et pueros duos, cum consensu magistri, in discipulatum suum, Marchelmum videlicet, et Marciunum germanos de gente Anglorum, secum inde adduxit." *Acta SS.*

numerous candidates for the ministry whom Boniface had in training in his different monasteries. He was with him also during his last journey to Friesland, and on the death of Bishop Eoban, determined to take upon himself the direction of the mission in that country. As abbot of a monastery at Utrecht (for he did not aspire to the vacant bishopric), he received much encouragement in his noble designs from pope Stephen III. and king Pepin. Under his superintendence the monastery at Utrecht became a missionary college, where assembled youths from England, France, Friesland, Saxony, Suabia, and Bavaria<sup>1</sup>, whom the abbot sought to send forth, after a suitable training, to emulate the zeal of his deceased master in the wilds of Frisia. In preparing them for their high duties, he was instant in season and out of season. He grudged no toil, he spared no pains. Early in the morning he might be found sitting in his cell waiting for such of his pupils as sought counsel or encouragement. One by one they would come to him, and received suitable advice according to their individual wants and peculiarities. While thus he himself superintended his missionary school, the want of a bishop was supplied by a friend and fellow-labourer, Alubert, who had come over from England, and whom he persuaded to return thither to receive episcopal consecration. Alubert crossed over to his native land, accompanied by Sigibodus and Liudger, two other pupils of Gregory; and during the year they spent in England they enjoyed the society and instruction of the celebrated Alcuin, who was superintending his school at York<sup>2</sup>. Thence they

<sup>1</sup> "Quidam eorum erant de nobili stirpe Francorum, quidam et de religiosa gente Anglorum; quidam et de novella Dei plantatione diebus nostris inchoata, Fresonum et Saxorum; quidam autem et de Bavariis et Suevis, vel de quacunque natione et gente misisset eos Deus."

*Vita S. Gregorii. Acta SS. Aug. 25. Vita S. Liudgeri, Pertz, II. 407.*

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Liudgeri, Pertz, II. 407.* One of the assistants of Gregory in the missionary work in the neighbourhood of Utrecht was "quidam presbiter sanctus de genere Anglorum nomine Liafwinus;" he had

## CHAP. X.

A.D. 755.

*Gregory's kindness to two robbers.*

returned, and the new bishop continued to assist Gregory in preparing suitable missionaries amongst the Frisians, and ordained them when prepared to that high office.

A pleasing instance of the way in which the abbot was enabled to adorn the doctrine of a Merciful and Crucified Redeemer amongst the heathen population is recorded by his biographer. Two of Gregory's brothers were journeying into Gaul when they were waylaid by robbers and murdered. A pursuit of the murderers was set on foot, and on their capture they were dragged into the presence of Gregory, and it was thought likely to soothe the pang of sorrow at the loss of those so dear to him, if he should be allowed to select the kind of death the murderers should die. But the abbot persuaded the captors to suffer the banditti to be released, and having caused them to be furnished with clothes and food, dismissed them with a suitable admonition. In labours of love like these, teaching and preaching, he persevered till he had reached his seventieth year. He was then seized with a paralysis of the left side, which continued for three years. During this time he still strove to exhort and advise his scholars, dividing amongst them presents of books, one of which, the *Enchiridion* of St Augustine, his biographer Liudger affectionately records as having been bestowed upon himself, and bidding all, amidst the toils and privations of their daily life, to think of those encouraging words of the Apostle, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." At last his sufferings became so severe he could bear up no longer. Having saluted his successor, Albric, he ordered that he should be carried to the church, and placed at the door,

come to Gregory announcing "sibi a Domino terribiliter trina admonitione fuisse præceptum, ut in confi-

nio Francorum atque Saxonum plebi in doctrina prodesse deberet."



in front and full view of the altar. There he prayed, and having received the holy Supper, died in the midst of his disciples, who had gathered round his bed, uttering as his last words, "To-day I have my release."

CHAP. X.

A.D. 781.

Another eminent disciple of the great Apostle of Germany was the Abbot Sturmi. He had been committed to the care of that eminent missionary by his parents, who were of noble descent, and natives of Bavaria, at the period that he was engaged in organizing the Church in that country. Boniface accepted the boy with joy, and on his arrival at Fritzlar, placed him in a monastery there, under the care of the abbot, Wigbert<sup>1</sup>. The latter undertook his education with alacrity, "taught him to repeat by heart the Psalms, then opened up to him the four Gospels, and bade him commit to memory large portions of the rest of the New, and also of the Old Testament<sup>2</sup>." The period of instruction completed, Sturmi was consecrated priest, and for three years continued to assist Boniface in missionary work. Then with that intense desire to penetrate the profoundest solitudes which we have already so often noticed as peculiar to the missionaries of the Middle Ages, he longed to discover a more lonely retreat, and to found a monastery in the awful forest of Buchonia (Burchwald), which then covered a great portion of Hessa. Such a desire was no sooner communicated to Boniface than it met with his most cordial approval, and he saw that an opening was now possible towards converting that impassable forest into a cultivated country, and establishing another of his numerous monastic colonies in its midst. Two companions

Sturmi of Fulda.

A.D. 736—8.

<sup>1</sup> Mabillon, *Acta SS. Ben.* III. 625.

<sup>2</sup> The following course of instruction as preparatory to missionary work at this period is interesting: "Psalms tenaci memoriæ traditis, lectionibusque quam plurimis perenni commemoratione firmatis, sacram cœpit Christi puer scripturam

spirituali intelligere sensu, quatuor evangeliorum Christi mysteria studiosissime curavit addiscere, Novum quoque ac Vetus Testamentum, in quantum sufficiebat, lectionis assiduitate in cordis sui thesaurum recondere curavit." *Vita S. Sturmi Abbatis*, Pertz, II. 366.

## CHAP. X.

A. D. 744.

were assigned to Sturmi, and before the three set out, Boniface solemnly commended them to the Lord<sup>1</sup>, bidding them "go forth in His name, and seek a suitable habitation for His servants in the wilderness."

*The foundation  
of the Monas-  
tery of Fulda.*

After wandering on for three days they at length reached a spot, now called Hersfelt, which seemed adapted to their purpose. A portion of ground was cleared, a few small huts were constructed of the bark of trees, and their new abode was consecrated with fasting and prayer. Sturmi, after a short stay, determined to return, and recount to the archbishop all that had befallen them. He told him exactly every particular respecting the situation, soil, watershed, and salubrity of their new abode<sup>2</sup>. The prudent Boniface would not immediately discourage his zealous disciple by telling him the spot was not suitable. He bade him stay with him and refresh himself awhile, and cheered his spirits by reminding him of the consolatory promises of Scripture, and the great cause they both had so much at heart. At length he told him plainly the situation was not advantageous; it was too near the pagan Saxons, and might suffer from their wild incursions; he bade him, therefore, persevere and renew the search for a locality more remote and more secure.

Again, therefore, Sturmi set forth, rejoined his associates at Hersfelt, informed them of the decision of Boniface, and persuaded them to renew the search. A second journey amidst the trackless forest was scarcely more successful. In a boat the little band sailed up the

<sup>1</sup> We have a specimen of the tenor of the prayer offered on such an occasion in *Vita S. Sequani*, quoted in Montalembert's *Monks of the West*, II. 323: "Lord, who hast made heaven and earth, who hearest the prayers of him that comes to Thee, from whom every good thing proceeds, and without whom all the efforts of human weakness are vain,

if Thou ordainest me to establish myself in this solitude, make it known to me, and lead to a good issue the beginning which Thou hast already granted to my devotion."

<sup>2</sup> "Eique et loci positionem et terræ qualitatem, et aquæ decursum, et fontes et valles, et omnia quæ ad locum pertinebant, per ordinem exposuit." Pertz, II. 367.

river Fulda, and observed several spots which seemed adapted to their purpose, but none presented the precise qualifications which Boniface required. Returning to Hersfelt they found a messenger from the archbishop, summoning Sturm to meet him at Fritzlar. The faithful monk straightway obeyed, and recounted to him the bootless result of the second expedition. But Boniface still encouraged him to make another attempt. "A place," said he, with the air of a prophet, "is prepared for us in the forest: whensoever it be the will of Christ, He will shew it to His servants; therefore desist not from thy inquiries, be assured that without doubt thou wilt discover it there<sup>1</sup>."

After a short interval of refreshment and repose, Sturm, not doubting but what the bishop said would come to pass, saddled his ass, and again, undeterred by previous failures, determined to prosecute the search. This time he went alone. Against the wild beasts he protected himself in the day-time by chanting hymns and prayers, and in the night-time he cut down with a sword branches from the trees, signed himself with the sign of the Cross, and commended himself to the divine protection. Thus secure he made his way under the huge oak-groves, where the foot of man had never trod, till on the fourth day, guided by a forester, he reached a spot on the banks of the Fulda which seemed to combine all the advantages of situation, salubrity, and seclusion which Boniface required<sup>2</sup>. Carefully he examined and re-examined the situation: every hill, every valley, every spring was duly noted, and then he returned, and after

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Sturm*, Pertz, II. 368.

<sup>2</sup> "Avidus locorum explorator ubique sagaci obtutu montuosa atque plana perlustrans loca, montes quoque et colles vallesque aspiciens, fontes et torrentes atque fluvios considerans, pergebat." On discovering the spot, "quanto longius et

latius gradiebatur, tanto amplius gratulabatur. Cumque ibi loci pulchritudine delectatus, non modicum diei spatium gyrando et explorando exegisset, benedicto loco et diligenter signato, gaudens inde profectus est."

*Vita S. Sturm*, Pertz, II. 369.

## CHAP. X.

A.D. 744.

*St Boniface begs  
the site of Car-*  
*loman.*

A.D. 744.

*The Rule of  
Fulda.*

communicating the joyful news to the brethren who were praying for his success at Hersfelt, he passed on and sought out the archbishop, to whom he recounted the circumstances of his third expedition, and his own belief that the long desired locality had at last been found. Boniface, overjoyed, listened eagerly to every detail, and at last announced that he was satisfied. Shortly afterwards he repaired to the court of Carloman, and prevailed upon him to grant him the spot with a demesne extending four miles each way<sup>1</sup>. Sturmi, with the grant thus ratified, was directed to take with him seven brethren, and commence the foundations of the monastery. Thither also Boniface himself repaired with several of the brethren, and watched the felling of the trees, and the clearing of the ground, with the same feeling of interest and delight which many of our Colonial Bishops have described at seeing the walls of some church rising in the backwoods of Canada or the valleys of New Zealand. Thus was founded the monastery of Fulda. No other of his many conventual houses did Boniface regard with such deep affection. Not only did he obtain the site from Carloman, but he exempted it from the spiritual supervision of the bishops, and subjected it solely to the Pope. Appointing Sturmi its first abbot, he dispatched him into Italy to inspect all the monastic houses, especially that of the Benedictines at Monte Cassino, that they might be reproduced at Fulda. By the wish, however, of the founder, the rule of Fulda was made more rigid even than that of St Benedict<sup>2</sup>. It was directed that the brethren should never eat flesh, that their strongest drink should be a thin beer, that they should have no serfs, but

<sup>1</sup> Pertz, II. 370.

<sup>2</sup> "Consensu omnium decretum est, ut apud illos nulla potio fortis quæ inebriare possit, sed tenuis cerevisia biberetur." *Vita S. Sturmi*, Pertz, II. 371. "Viros strictæ abs-

tinentiæ, absque carne et vino, absque sicera et servis, proprio manuum suarum labore contentos." *Ep. Bon. LXXV.* For the accurate description of the site of Fulda, see *Bonifacii Ep. LXXVI.*

should subsist entirely by the labour of their own hands. So popular did the new monastery become, especially after the remains of the great Apostle of Germany had been transferred thither, that numbers even more than it could contain sought to be received within its walls. Sturmi is said to have directed the labours of upwards of four thousand monks, who gladly submitted to his paternal rule, and employed themselves in clearing the land, and reducing the wilderness to cultivation, or preparing themselves for missionary labour amongst their Teutonic brethren. The life of the good abbot was not without its troubles. The exemption Boniface had procured for his favourite institution from episcopal supervision provoked the jealousy of his successor archbishop Lull, and brought about the banishment of Sturmi from the monastery, and his temporary disgrace at the court of Pepin. But the clouds cleared away; Sturmi was restored, and he lived to a good old age, superintending the labours of his numerous brethren, erecting churches, and adorning and beautifying his favourite retreat.

With the accession of Charlemagne he was constrained to take part in other methods of winning over the heathen Saxons<sup>1</sup> to the Christian faith than those which his own conscience approved, or the spirit of his creed sanctioned. In the year 772, memorable for the destruction of the Irmin-Saule, commenced the first of the many wars of Charlemagne against the Saxon race<sup>2</sup>. Conscious that on their subjugation depended not only his own security<sup>3</sup>, but that of Europe

CHAP. X.  
A.D. 744—763.

*Accession of  
Charlemagne.*

A.D. 772.

*Wars with the  
Saxons.*

<sup>1</sup> In the year A.D. 772, Charlemagne took Eresburg, a strong fortress on the Drimel, and thence advanced to "a kind of religious capital, either of the whole Saxon nation, or at least of the more considerable tribes," near the source of the Lippe, where was the celebrated idol, the Irmin-Saule, which Charlemagne destroyed. Milman's *Latin Christianity*, II. 283.

<sup>2</sup> "The Saxon race now occupied the whole North of Germany, from the Baltic along the whole Eastern frontier of the Frankish kingdom, and were divided into three leading tribes, the Ostphalians, the Westphalians, and the Angarians." Milman's *Latin Christianity*, II. 281.

<sup>3</sup> 1. The ancient antipathy of the race, 2. the growing tendency to civilized habits among the Franks,

CHAP. X.

A.D. 772.

A.D. 776.

also, that monarch determined at all risks to break their spirit, to roll back the tide of barbarian aggression, to penetrate their bleak and unknown world, to seek them out amidst their endless forests, and wide heaths, and trackless swamps, and to erect there the Christian Church and the monastic seminary. Strange methods were now resorted to for the purpose of winning over the ferocious Saxon to the new faith. On one occasion the abbot of Fulda was summoned to join the emperor, who, anxious to conquer the wild race, and to force them to accept the yoke of civilization, after consulting his clergy, had assembled a great army, and invoking the name of Christ, set out for Saxony<sup>1</sup>, "attended," says the biographer of Sturmi, "by a numerous retinue of priests, abbots, and orthodox adherents of the true faith, in order to induce a nation, which from the beginning of the world had been tied and bound with the chains of dæmons, to believe the sacred doctrines and submit to the light and easy yoke of Christ. And on his arrival in their country, partly by war, partly by persuasion, partly by gifts, he won over the race to the faith, and dividing their land into dioceses, handed over the population to the spiritual instructions of his clergy."

Sturmi now found full employment for all his energies. The greater portion of the conquered race, who had felt the edge of Charlemagne's sword, and witnessed the de-

were, according to Michelet, the chief causes of these wars. Hallam considers the last cause quite sufficient to account for the conflict. "It was that which makes the Red Indian perceive an enemy in the Anglo-American, and the Australian savage in the Englishman. The Saxons, in their deep forests and scantily-cultivated plains, could not bear fixed boundaries of land. Their *gan* was indefinite; the *mansus* was certain; it annihilated the barba-

rian's only method of combining liberty with possession of land." No wonder also they hated the ecclesiastical system of the conqueror, for "with the Church came churches, and for churches there must be towns, and for towns a magistracy, and for magistracy law and the means of enforcing it." Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Suppl. notes, p. 25. Michelet, I. 78.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Sturmi*, Pertz, II. 376.

struction of the great object of their adoration, the Irmin-Saule, were committed to his care. Aided by the numerous brethren of Fulda he girded himself for the difficult task, proclaimed the futility of their idolatrous worship, exhorted them to destroy their temples, to cut down their groves, and to embrace the faith. His exertions were rewarded with partial success. Many of the vanquished Saxons, making a virtue of necessity, accepted the ritual of their conquerors, and were, with but little discrimination, immersed in, or sprinkled with the regenerating waters. But a rebellion broke out in 778. The Saxons burst in numbers into the territory of Fulda, determined to burn the monastery with fire, and destroy the enemies of their national faith<sup>1</sup>. The abbot was informed of their design, and determined to seek safety in flight. The coffin of the Apostle of Germany was hastily exhumed, and the brethren set forth from their retreat. They had not proceeded far when they heard that the tide had turned, and the Saxons been driven back. Charlemagne had flown to the rescue, and advanced his forces as far as the Weser. But Sturm, who had been far from well when obliged to fly, sickened rapidly after his return to the monastery. In vain the emperor sent him his own physician Wintar. A mistake was made in his prescriptions, and the sufferings of his patient were only increased. Perceiving that his end was nigh, the abbot bade all the bells to be rung, and the brethren to assemble round his bed<sup>2</sup>. They came, and he begged them all to forgive him if any had aught against him, and declared that he for his part forgave all, even his old enemy archbishop Lull. The next day he sunk rapidly, and as the brethren stood round his bed, "Father," said one, "we doubt not thou art about to depart hence and to be with the Lord, we be-

A.D. 778.

Attack on Fulda.

A.D. 779.

Sturm's death.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Sturm*, Pertz, II. 376.

<sup>2</sup> "Currere citius ad ecclesiam jubet, omnes gloggas (campanas)

pariter moveri imperavit, et fratribus congregatis obitum suum nuntiare præcepit." Pertz, II. 377.

CHAP. X.

A. D. 779.

seech thee, therefore, that in the kingdom of heaven thou wilt remember us, and pray unto the Lord in behalf of thy servants, for sure we are that the prayers of such an advocate will avail us much." "Shew yourselves worthy," was the answer of the dying abbot, "that I should pray for you, and I will do as ye require." With these words he expired on the 17th of December, 779.

*Effect of the  
Saxon wars on  
the Missionary  
spirit.*

While the abbot was thus peacefully breathing forth his life in the monastery of Fulda, the storm of war was raging without through the length and breadth of the Saxon territory. In 779 the great Carl chased his indefatigable enemies to the Weser, in the following year he advanced as far as the Elbe. In the midst of the constant din of arms, the marching and countermarching of troops, the burning of monasteries and churches, it is not surprising that even missionaries were tempted to forget that "the weapons of their warfare" were "not carnal," and at times appealed to other feelings than those of faith and love. One of these, Lebuin<sup>1</sup>, a man of intrepid zeal, had come over from England, and built him an oratory on the banks of the Ysell. Here, encouraged by the advice and countenance of Gregory the abbot of Utrecht, he continued to exhort the pagan Saxons to forsake their idolatry, and by the ruggedness of his life he charmed many even of the martial chiefs. But the anger of the tribes was excited, they rose in arms and burnt his oratory to the ground. Nothing daunted, he determined to go forth and confront the whole nation at their approaching assembly<sup>2</sup> on the Weser. Arraying himself in his full clerical dress, with an uplifted Cross in one hand, and a volume of the Gospels

A. D. 776.

<sup>1</sup> See *Vita S. Lebuini*, Pertz, II. 361.

<sup>2</sup> "Statuto tempore anni semel ex singulis pagis, atque ex iisdem ordinibus tripartitis, singillatim viri duodecim electi, et in unum collecti, in media Saxonia secus flumen Wi-

seram, et locum, Marklo nuncupatum, exercebant generale concilium, tractantes, sancientes, et propalantes communis commoda utilitatis, juxta placitum a se statutæ legis." *Vita S. Lebuini*, Pertz, II. 362.



in the other, he presented himself to the astonished Saxons, as they were engaged in solemn sacrifice to their national gods. "Hearken unto me," he thundered forth, "and not indeed to me, but unto Him that speaketh by me. I declare unto you the commands of Him whom all things serve and obey." Struck dumb with astonishment the warriors listened, as he went on<sup>1</sup>, "Hearken, all ye, and know that God is the Creator of heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that there are therein. He is the one only and true God. He made us, and not we ourselves, nor is there any other than He. The images, which ye call gods, and which, beguiled by the devil, ye worship, what are they but gold, or silver, or brass, or stone, or wood? They neither live, nor move, nor feel; they are but the work of men's hands, they can neither help themselves nor any one else. God the only good and righteous Being, whose mercy and truth remain for ever, moved with pity that ye should be thus seduced by the errors of dæmons, has charged me as His ambassador to beseech you to lay aside your old errors, and to turn with sincere and true faith to Him by whose goodness ye were created, and in whom we live and move and have our being. If ye will acknowledge Him, and repent, and be baptized, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and will keep His commandments, then will He preserve you from all evil, He will vouchsafe unto you the blessings of peace, and in the world to come, life everlasting. But if ye despise and reject His counsels, and persist in your present errors, know that ye will suffer terrible punishment for scorning His merciful warning. Behold, I, His ambassador, declare unto you the sentence which has gone forth from His mouth, and which cannot change. If ye do not obey His commands, then will sudden destruction come upon you. For the King of kings and Lord of lords

CHAP. X.

A.D. 776.

*His bold address  
to the Saxon  
Council.*

A.D. 772—776.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Lebuini*, Pertz, II. 362.

CHAP. X.  
A. D. 776.

hath appointed a brave, prudent, and terrible prince, who is not afar off, but nigh at hand. He, like a swift and roaring torrent, will burst upon you, and subdue the ferocity of your hearts, and crush your stiffnecked obstinacy. He shall invade your land with a mighty host, and ravage it with fire and sword, desolation, and destruction. As the avenging wrath of that God, whom ye have ever provoked, he shall slay some of you with the sword, some he shall cause to waste away in poverty and want, some he shall lead into perpetual captivity; your wives and children he shall sell into slavery, and the residue of you he will reduce to ignominious subjection, that in you may justly be fulfilled what has long since been predicted, "They were made a handful and scattered, and tormented with the tribulation and anguish of the wicked<sup>1</sup>."

*Narrow escape  
of the Mis-  
sionary.*

The effect of these last words can easily be imagined. The warriors, who had listened at first with awe-struck reverence, were seized with ungovernable fury. "Here is that seducer," they cried with one voice, "that enemy of our sacred rites, and our country; away with him from the earth, and let him suffer the just punishment of his crimes." The whole assembly was in a ferment. Stakes were cut from the adjoining thickets, stones were taken up, and the dauntless missionary would have atoned for his temerity with his life, had it not been for the intervention of an aged chief, named Buto, who, standing on an eminence, addressed the excited throng: "Men and heroes all, listen unto my words. Many a time have ambassadors come to us from the Normans, the Slaves, and the Frisons; as is our custom, we have listened diligently to their words, received them in peace, and dismissed them to their homes loaded with suitable presents. But now an ambassador of

<sup>1</sup> "Ut de vobis jamdudum jure prædictum videri possit: Et pauci facti sunt, et vexati sunt a tribula-

tione malorum et dolore." Pertz, II. 363.

God Supreme, who has announced to us words of life and eternal salvation, hath not only been despised, but struck and stoned, and almost deprived of life. That the God who sent him hither is great and powerful is plain from the fact that He has delivered His servant out of our hands. Be assured, then, that what He hath threatened will certainly come to pass, and those judgments He has denounced will come upon us from a God whom we see to be so great and powerful."

With these words the old man calmed the storm, and so Lebuin escaped, nor did any seek his life. The spirit, however, which breathes through his address to the heathen warriors,—and for this reason we bring it forward at this point,—illustrates the spirit of the Emperor, the spirit of the times. The Saxons were looked upon as barbarians and heathens, with whom no treaties could be maintained. The exigencies of the age made Charlemagne a Mahometan Apostle of the Gospel<sup>1</sup>. While his soldiers fought against their idolatrous foes, threw down their temples, cut down their groves, the priests followed in the wake of the armies. The reception of baptism was the symbol of peace; refusal of the rite the symptom of disaffection, and the signal of war. In vain men like Alcuin protested against the monarch's plan for securing at once the subjection and the conversion of the Saxons; in vain he exhorted him to call to mind the example of the Apostles and their Divine Master in the propagation of the Gospel. "No man putteth new wine into old bottles," says he in one of his letters, quoting the words of Christ; "you might hence be led to consider whether it was well done to impose on a rude people at their first conversion the yoke of tithes. Did the Apostles, who were sent out to preach by the Lord Himself, require tithes, or anywhere prescribe that they

CHAP. X.

A.D. 776.

*The spirit of his sermon the spirit of the times.*

A.D. 780—785.

*Protests of Alcuin.*

<sup>1</sup> See Hallam's *Middle Ages*, I. 9. Milman's *Latin Christianity*, II. 280.

CHAP. X.

A. D. 780—785.

should be exacted?" Again, in another letter to Arno, archbishop of Salzburg, he asks, "Of what use is baptism without faith? The Apostle says, 'without faith it is impossible to please God.' It is because they have never had the principle of faith in their hearts that the wretched people of Saxony have so often abused the sacrament of baptism. Faith, as St Augustine says, is a matter of free-will, and not of compulsion. How can a man be forced to believe what he does not believe? A man may, indeed, be forced to baptism, but not to faith."

*His protests  
ineffectual.*

His protests, however, did not receive the attention they deserved. Charlemagne persisted in his policy. Death was denounced as the penalty for neglecting baptism, or resorting to secret idolatry; the same penalty was threatened against burning churches, neglecting fasts, burning the dead according to heathen customs, or offering human sacrifices. Still side by side with this short-sighted policy, which could not fail to promote the commingling of Christian and heathen elements, other and better agencies were at work. The disciples whom Boniface had trained did not fail to walk in the steps of their master, and laboured not only to uproot idolatry, but to plant the truth which should absorb heathen error, building schools and monasteries, erecting churches, and thus laying the best and surest foundations for the future.

*St Liudger.*

The abbey of Utrecht, under the presidency of the devoted Gregory, had sent forth many noble labourers into the mission-field, and many more had come over from England to take their share in the good work, and to spread the knowledge of the truth. One of the most eminent of these, and to whom allusion has already been made, was Liudger, the grandson of Wursing, a Frisian chief, and firm friend of Willibrord<sup>1</sup>. The seeds of early piety had been quickened within him in the school of Utrecht,

<sup>1</sup> See above, Chapter VIII. p. 173 *n*.

and his knowledge had been still further extended in that of Alcuin at York, whither Gregory, as we have seen<sup>1</sup>, had sent him with his coadjutor Alubert. He returned after an interval of three years and six months; well supplied with books, and well instructed, he commenced his missionary labours in the region where Boniface had met with his death, assisting Albric, the successor of Gregory, who was consecrated bishop of Cologne. His exertions, however, had not continued more than seven years, when they were rudely cut short by a rebellion of the Saxons, who rose in 780, under their leader Wittekind, and ravaged the country from Cologne to Coblentz. Albric died, and from the sight of burning churches and exiled clergy Liudger betook himself with two companions to Rome, and thence to the abbey of Monte Cassino, to study the monastic rule of St Benedict. Returning in 785 he found that peace had been restored, and that the Saxon chief Wittekind had submitted to baptism. His arrival becoming known to the emperor, the latter assigned him a sphere of labour among the Frisians in the neighbourhood of Gröningen and Norden<sup>2</sup>.

CHAP. X.

A.D. 780—785.

A.D. 785.

Wittekind.

Expedition to Heiligoland.

Not content with the area marked out for him, Liudger extended his anxieties to Fositesland, famous, as we have seen, in the life Willibrord<sup>3</sup>. His biographer tells us that, as he sailed to the island, holding the Cross in his hand, a dark mist appeared to the sailors to roll off the shore, followed by a bright calm. Interpreting this as an omen of good success, Liudger landed, preached the Word, and destroyed the temples, erecting churches in their stead. Many listened to his message and were baptized

<sup>1</sup> The occasion of his return is thus related: "Egredientibus civibus illis ad bellum contra inimicos suos, (i. e. at York), contigit, ut, per rixam interficeretur filius cujusdam comitis ipsius provincie a Fresone quodam negotiatore, et idcirco Fresones festi-

naverunt egredi de regione Anglorum, timentes iram propinquorum interfecti juvenis." *Vita S. Liudgeri*, cap. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Liudgeri*, Pertz, II. 410.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter IX. p. 172.

CHAP. X. in the waters of the very fountain in which Willibrord,  
 A. D. 785. at so much risk, had baptized three of the islanders on a former occasion. A son also of one of the chiefs embraced the faith, was baptized, and became a teacher of the Frisians, and the founder of a monastery. After the complete subjugation of the Saxons, Liudger was directed by the emperor to repair to the district of Münster. Here he erected a monastery, travelled over the district with unflagging energy, instructed the barbarous tribes, and appointed priests to take charge of them. After many refusals he was at last induced by Hildebold, archbishop of Cologne, to accept the episcopal dignity; but he did not cease to carry on as strenuously as ever his missionary work, and even longed to undertake a mission to the wild Normans; this, however, the emperor would not allow, and he was fain to remain in his own diocese, where he did not cease to labour till the day of his death, in 809. On this day, after preaching to two different congregations in the morning at Cosfeld, and celebrating the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the afternoon at Billerbeck, he bade farewell to the sheep for whom he had so long laboured, and entered into his rest<sup>1</sup>.

Hildebold.

A. D. 809.

Willehad.

A. D. 779.

Another eminent missionary, and during part of his life a contemporary of Liudger, was Willehad, a native of Northumbria<sup>2</sup>, who was induced to leave his country and join the band of missionaries, commencing, like Liudger, in the district where Boniface suffered. Removing thence to the district of Gröningen, he found himself in the midst of a population still fanatically addicted to paganism. Undeterred by the enmity he was too likely

<sup>1</sup> "Ipse vero die dominico, cum in subsequenti nocte de hoc mundo esset iturus ad Dominum, quasi valefaciens creditis sibi ovibus in duabus suis ecclesiis publice prædicavit, mane scilicet in loco qui dicitur Coas-

felt, canente presbytero missam, et circa horam tertiam in loco nuncupato Billurbike." *Vita S. Liudgeri*, Pertz, II. 414.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Willehadi*, Pertz, II. 380. Adam. Brem. I. 12.

to arouse, he persevered in delivering his message, de-claimed against the futility of the national worship, and urged them to embrace the true faith. The wrath of the people burst forth, they gnashed with their teeth at the contemner of their gods, and declared him worthy of death. One of the chiefs urged caution before proceeding to such an extremity: "this faith," said he, "is new to us, and as yet we know not whether it be offered to us by some deity; the preacher is not guilty of any crime; let him not, then, be put to death, but let us cast lots, and ascertain what is the will of heaven respecting him, whether he ought to live or die." The people consented, and the lots were cast. The decision was in his favour, and he was sent away in safety, and was enabled to prosecute his labours in the region of Drenthe. All went well for some time; the people listened to the intrepid preacher; and not a few embraced the doctrines he taught them. At last some of his companions, in the spirit of Columbanus and Gallus, began to attack the objects of native worship. A riot ensued, and Willehad was set upon with clubs, and severely wounded. One of his assailants drew his sword, but the blow, which was intended to have cleft his skull, only severed the thong which fastened the box of relics that he carried. Even the pagans interpreted this as a favourable omen, and he was suffered to depart.

*Appeal to the sacred lots.*

Charlemagne, who had just returned from an expedition against his old enemies, the Saxons, now proposed that he should labour amongst the people in the district of Wigmodia, and raise up amongst them an outpost of Christian civilization. The intrepid man eagerly accepted the arduous task, settled down amongst the people, and, for a space of two years, saw in the adhesion, whether feigned or real, of the natives to the new faith, some reward of his labours. But the rebellion of Wittekind in 782 roused all the old animosity, the churches fell, several of the clergy were

*Labours in Wigmodia.*

CHAP. X.

A. D. 782.

A. D. 785.

A. D. 787.

*Consecrated  
bishop.*

murdered<sup>1</sup>, and Willehad was constrained to fly for his life. An interval of rest was now afforded him, and he turned it to account by visiting Rome, and obtained an interview with the Pope. Returning through France, he took up his abode in a convent founded by Willibrord at Epternach. Here he gathered together his scattered scholars, and spent two years in the quiet study of the Scriptures, transcribing the Epistles of St Paul into a single volume<sup>2</sup>, and edifying many by the consistency and holiness of his life and conversation. Again, however, he was called forth from his seclusion by the Emperor, and bidden to revisit his former sphere of labour<sup>3</sup>. The churches which had been destroyed during the Saxon rising were rebuilt, and approved clergy stationed in all places where the people appeared willing to receive the Word. The land enjoyed a still longer period of rest on the baptism of Wittekind, and Charlemagne, judging it a fit opportunity to found an episcopal diocese, caused Willehad to be consecrated the first bishop of Eastern Frisia and Saxony<sup>4</sup>. He had no sooner been raised to this new dignity than he commenced a general visitation of his diocese, preaching the Word where as yet it had not been heard, and confirming all that had been baptized. He also erected and consecrated with no little pomp a cathedral church at Bremen. But he had presided over his diocese little more than two years, when a fever, caught during one of his numerous visitation journeys, laid him on his deathbed near Blexem on the Weser. Round his bed gathered the many scholars he had trained and

<sup>1</sup> "Folcardum presbyterum cum Emmiggo comite in pago denominato Lëri, Benjamin autem in Ubhriustri, Atrebanum vero clericum in Thiatmaresgaho, Gêrwalum quoque cum sociis suis in Brema, odio nominis Christiani, gladio peremerunt." *Vita S. Willehadi*, cap. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Long preserved as a precious relic by succeeding bishops of Bremen.

<sup>3</sup> Giving him, as became usual now, in consequence of the danger attending missionary enterprise among the Saxons, "pro consolatione laboris ac præsidio subsequentium ejus, in beneficium quandam cellam in Frantia, quæ appellatur Justina." *Ibid.* cap. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Adam. Brem. i. 13.



with whom he had shared so many perils. To their mournful regrets at the prospect of being so soon parted from their master and friend<sup>1</sup>, he replied in words which expressed not only his own feelings, but those, doubtless, of many then toiling in the arduous Saxon mission-field; "O seek not any longer to detain me from the presence of my Lord; suffer me to be released from the trials of this troublesome world. I have no desire to live any longer, and I fear not to die. I will only beseech my Lord, whom I have striven to love with my whole heart, that He will deign to give me such a reward for my labour as He in His mercy may see fit. The sheep which He entrusted to me, I again commit to His care. If I have done anything that is good, it has been done through His strength. His goodness will never fail you, for the whole earth is full of His mercy<sup>2</sup>." With these words he expired on the 8th of November, 789, and was buried in his own cathedral at Bremen.

Three years after his death the long struggle between Charlemagne and the Saxons, between civilization and heathenism, came to a close. For thirty-one years that monarch had persevered in his policy of subjugating his restless foes, and now he had his reward. Slowly but steadily the wave of conquest had extended into the unknown Saxon world, from the Drimel to the Lippe, from the Weser to the Elbe, and thence to the sea, the limit of the Saxon dominion. Peace and rebellion, the re-

<sup>1</sup> "A primævis temporibus magnæ vir iste fuit continentiæ, ac devote Domino omnipotenti ab ineunte servivit ætate. Vinum et siceram, ac omne unde inebriari potest non bibit. Æsca autem ejus erat panis et mel, holera et poma. Namque ab esu carniū, a lacte et piscibus temperabat, nisi quod memoratus apostolicus Adrianus, ei jam in novissimo propter valetudines quas in corpore

tolerabat frequentes, quo piscem comederet, præcepit." *Vita S. Willehadi*, cap. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Willehadi*, Pertz, II. 384. One of his pupils Willeric, presided as bishop of Bremen from the year 789 to 838, and carried on with notable zeal the missionary work in Transalbingia. See Adam. Brem. I. 15. Wiltch, *Geog. and Statistics of the Church*, I. 387, E. T.

CHAP. X.

A. D. 803.

A. D. 780—805.

ception of baptism and the burning of Christian churches, had marked the successive alternations of the bloody strife, and at last, wearied with the ceaseless din of war, the Saxons were fain to acknowledge that Civilization had conquered. Cruel as may have been some of the expedients to which the victor resorted in gaining his end, he followed up his conquests by measures which command our respect. His eight bishoprics<sup>1</sup> of Osnaburg, Bremen, Münster, Minden, Halberstadt, Paderborn, Verden, and Hildesheim, with many monasteries, which he richly endowed, were so many "great religious colonies<sup>2</sup>," whence the blessings of Christianity and civilization might spread in ever-widening circles. It may, indeed, be said that he exalted the Church to a dangerous elevation; but while she possessed a monopoly of the knowledge of the age, it was inevitable, for nowhere else could either the means or the men be found to exert a beneficial influence on the half-civilized masses he had subdued. Now that the great fabric of the Carlovingian Empire has passed away, we may smile at his Capitularies, his "Fields of May," his "Missi Dominici;" but it is difficult to see how the wild world of the ninth century could have been lifted out of the slough of barbarism, or the isolated efforts of a Sturm, a Willehad, or a Liudger, could have brought forth any fruit to perfection, without the rare energy and skill of this great monarch. For the dark shadow of his private life, and the cruelty of some of his campaigns<sup>3</sup>, may be pleaded as some atonement "the huge Dom-Minsters" which look into the waters of the Rhine, and the Schools where Alcuin from England, and Clement<sup>4</sup> from Ireland, and Peter of Pisa, and Paulinus of Aquitaine, and many others, kept alive the torch of learning, and handed it on to others.

<sup>1</sup> Wiltsch's *Geography and Statistics of the Church*, I. 373, and notes. The foundation of these bishoprics extends from 780—805.

<sup>2</sup> Milman, II. 287.

<sup>3</sup> Palgrave's *Normandy*, I. 26. Sir J. Stephen's *Lectures*, I. 96.

<sup>4</sup> Lanigan, III. 208.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MISSIONARY EFFORTS IN DENMARK AND SWEDEN.

A.D. 800—1011.

“O mira Dei Omnipotentis providentia de vocatione gentium, quam disponit artifex, ut vult, et quando vult, et per quem vult. Ecce quod longo prius tempore Willebrordum item alios et Ebonem voluisse legimus nec potuisse, nunc Ansgarium nostrum et voluisse et perfecisse miramur, dicentes cum Apostolo: *Non est volentis neque currentis, sed est Dei miserentis.*”—ADAMUS BREMENSIS.

THOUGH the victories which Charlemagne gained over the Saxons were thus decisive, he yet lived to see that the tide of barbaric invasion had been thrown back only to be poured upon Europe by a different channel. According to the well-known story of the Mediæval chronicler<sup>1</sup>, he was one day at Narbonne, when, in the midst of the banquet, some swift barks were seen putting into the harbour. The company started up, and while some pronounced the crew to be Jewish, others African, others British traders, the keen eye of the great emperor discerned that they had come on no peaceful errand: “It is not with merchandise,” said he, “that yonder ships are laden, they are manned with most terrible enemies;” and then he advanced to the window, and stood there a long while in tears. No one dared to ask him the cause of his grief, but he at length

CHAP. XI.

A.D. 800—822.

*Charlemagne and the Norsemen.*

<sup>1</sup> Monachi Sangall. *Gesta Caroli*, II. 14, Pertz, II. 757.

explained it himself. "It is not for myself," said he, "that I am weeping, or for any harm that yon barks can do to me. But truly I am pained to think that even during my lifetime they have dared to approach this shore, and greater still is my grief when I reflect on the evils they will bring on my successors." His words were only too truly fulfilled. The sight of those piratical banners told its own tale. The fleets he had built, the strong forts and garrison towns he had erected at the mouths of the various rivers throughout his empire were neglected by his successors, and what he foresaw came to pass. Year after year during the ninth century, the children of the North burst forth from their pine-forests, their creeks, and fiords, and icy lakes, and prowled along the defenceless shores of Germany, and France, and England. Nothing seemed to daunt them. They laughed at the fiercest storms, landed on the most inaccessible coasts, pushed up the shallowest rivers, while Charlemagne's degenerate ancestors, bowed down by a wretched fatalism, scarcely dared to lift a hand, and tamely beheld the fairest towns in their dominions sacked and burnt by the crews of those terrible barks<sup>1</sup>.

*Ravages of the  
Norsemen.*

"Take a map," writes Sir Francis Palgrave<sup>2</sup> in one of his most picturesque passages, "and colour with vermilion the provinces, districts, and shores which the Northmen visited, as the record of each invasion. The colouring will have to be repeated more than ninety times successively, before you arrive at the conclusion of the Carlovingian dynasty. Furthermore, mark by the usual symbol of war, two crossed swords, the localities where battles were fought by or against the pirates; where they were defeated or triumphant, or where they pillaged, burned, destroyed; and the valleys and banks of the Elbe, Rhine, and Moselle,

<sup>1</sup> On the cowardice of the French during the Norman incursions, see Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Suppl. notes, p. 43. Michelet's *France*, I. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Normandy and England*, I. 419. See also Milman's *Latin Christianity*, II. 431—434.

Scheldt, Meuse, Somme and Seine, Loire, Garonne, and Adour, the inland Allier, and all the coasts and coastlands between estuary and estuary, and the countries between the river-streams, will appear bristling as with chevaux-de-frise. The strongly-fenced Roman cities, the venerated abbeys and their dependent bourgades, often more flourishing and extensive than the ancient seats of government, the opulent sea-ports and trading-towns, were all equally exposed to the Danish attacks, stunned by the Northmen's approach, subjugated by their fury."

But while the mind faintly strives to conceive the misery and desolation thus inflicted on almost every town and village of Germany and France, it finds satisfaction in the thought that even now missionary zeal did not falter, that while every estuary and river were darkening under the dark sails of the Northmen's barks, men were found bold enough to penetrate into the dreary regions whence they issued forth, to seek them out amidst their pine-forests and icebound lakes, and implant the first germs of Christian civilization even in the last retreats of the old Teutonic faith. Already, so early as the year 780, Willehad, as we have seen, had carried the Word as far as the Ditmarsi<sup>1</sup>, in the neighbourhood of Hamburg, and the intrepid Liudger had longed to penetrate into still more Northern regions. And though Charlemagne positively forbade his making the attempt, he was not insensible to the value of such self-denying zeal, and, at the conclusion of his Saxon wars, had already conceived the idea of establishing an archbishopric at Hamburg<sup>2</sup>, as a starting-point for further missionary operations.

*Early missionary efforts.*

*Willehad.*

*Liudger.*

<sup>1</sup> "Transalbianorum Saxonum tres sunt populi: primi ad oceanum *Thiatmarsgi* (al. Thiedmarsi), et eorum ecclesia Mildenthorp (al. Melindorf); secundi *Holtzati*, dicti a sylvis, quas incolunt, eos Sturia flumen interfuit, quorum ecclesia

Sconenfeld; tertii, qui et nobiliores, *Sturmarii* dicuntur, eo quod seditionibus illa gens frequenter agitur." Adam. Brem. *H. Eccl.* c. lxi.

<sup>2</sup> Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, I. 441.

## CHAP. XI.

A. D. 822.

*Visit of Harold  
Klak to the  
Court of Louis-  
le-Débonnaire.**Mission of  
Archbishop  
Ebbo.**Baptism of  
Harold, his  
queen, and son.*

Though unable himself to carry out this design, it was not neglected by Louis-le-Débonnaire. He had not long succeeded to the throne, when he was visited by Harold Klak, king of Jutland, begging his interference in a dispute concerning the throne of Denmark, between himself and the sons of Godfrey king of Lethra<sup>1</sup>. When Harold had done homage to Louis, it was agreed that an army of Franks and Slavonians should aid him in recovering his dominions, and Ebbo, the primate of France, deeming the opportunity signally auspicious, was not unwilling to leave his palace at Rheims, and undertake the arduous task of combining with the expedition the promulgation of the Gospel. Long desirous of engaging in such a work, and possessing peculiar qualifications for uniting the office of ambassador and teacher amongst the heathen, he set out, about the year 822, accompanied by the eminent Halitgar, bishop of Cambrai, and encouraged by the joint co-operation of Pope Pascal I. and the diet of Attigny<sup>2</sup>. The missionaries made Welanao, in Holstein, their head-quarters; but of their operations we have little or no information. According to one account, after they had achieved some little success, two of the archbishop's retinue were passing through a town in the country of the Ditmars, on Woden's-day, when they were struck by lightning, and the converts regarding this as a sign of the wrath of their ancient god against the teachers of a hostile faith, fell away, and thus the archbishop's work came to an end. He returned, however, after an absence of three years, accompanied by Harold himself, his queen, and a retinue of Danes, who were all baptized with great pomp in the vast Dom of Mayence<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> "From the lineage of Godfrey came 'Eric of the bloody axe,' 'king of the Pagans,' in Northumbria, whilst Harold was grandfather to *Gorm-kín-ríge*, Gorm the mighty, the Gormund, Codrinus, Guthrun, or Guthrun-Athelstan, of our Eng-

lish historians, who in King Alfred's time conquered East Anglia, and settled the Danelaghe." Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, I. 256.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, c. xiii. Pertz, II. 699. Adam. Brem. I. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Thegani Vita Hludowici Imp.*

Louis stood as sponsor for Harold, Judith for his queen, Lothair for their son Godfrey, while the different members of the Danish suite found many among the Frankish courtiers ready to do them a similar service. A sumptuous entertainment, and the bestowal of royal gifts, accompanied the administration of the rite, while Harold solemnly did homage to the emperor, and agreed to hold the Danish kingdom as a feudatory of the Carlovingian crown.

CHAP. XI.  
A.D. 826.

\* A door was thus opened for still further operations, and before the impression made at Mayence should be effaced, Ebbo determined to seek out a monk, who might be willing to accompany the newly-baptized king on his return to Denmark, and remain at the court as a priest and teacher. But the well-known ferocity of the Northmen long deterred any one from offering himself for such a duty. At length, Wala the abbot of Corbey near Amiens, announced that one of his monks was not unwilling to undertake the arduous task.

The intrepid volunteer was Anskar, a native of a village not far from the monastery<sup>1</sup>. Born in the year 801, and early devoted by his parents to the monastic life, he had always evinced the deepest religious enthusiasm, and his ardent imagination taught him to believe that he often saw visions, and heard voices from another world. He had lost his mother when he was only five years of age, and the vision of her surrounded by a majestic choir of virgins, the fairest of whom bade him, if he would join

Anskar.

Birth and education.

c. xxxiii. Pertz, II. 597. Adam. Brem. I. 17. "Ludovicus ... conditionem barbaro intulit, opem spondendo, si Christi cultum exequi consensisset. Nullam enim posse aiebat animorum intervenire concordiam, dissona sacra complexis. Quamobrem petitorum opis primum religionis contubernio opus habere, neque magnorum operum consortes existere posse, quos supernæ venerationis formula dispersasset." Saxo Grammaticus,

lib. ix. Compare the baptism of Guthrun and thirty of his chieftains after his defeat by Alfred at Eddington in 879. On the number of abbots of Danish origin at the convent of Croyland, from the ninth to the twelfth century, see Worsae's *Danes and Northmen*, p. 131. Pauli's *Alfred*, p. 109.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, Pertz, *Mon. Germ.* II. 690—725.

Hears of the  
death of Charle-  
magne.

his mother in bliss, flee the pomps and vanities of the world, exerted a profound impression on his susceptible heart, and he devoted himself more than ever to prayer and meditation. When he was thirteen years of age, news reached the monastery of the death of the Emperor Charlemagne. Anskar had relaxed somewhat from his youthful austerities at this period, and the thought that even that mighty prince, whom he himself had seen in all the plenitude of power, could not escape the hand of death, filled him with awe and horror<sup>1</sup>. The greatest of great emperors had passed away, and now, in the sepulchre which he had dug for himself, he was "sitting on his curule chair, clad in his silken robes, ponderous with broidery, pearls, and orfray, the imperial diadem on his head, his closed eyelids covered, his face swathed in the dead-clothes, girt with his baldric, the ivory horn slung in his scarf, his good sword Joyeuse by his side, the Gospel-book open on his lap, musk and amber and sweet spices poured around<sup>2</sup>." No wonder that as the tale of the mighty monarch's death and strange entombment sped from monastery to monastery, there were "great searchings of heart" in the silent cloisters. At Corbey Anskar must have often gazed on the blinded face of Desiderius, the king of the Lombards, and now, when he heard his brethren whisper to one another their dread misgivings<sup>3</sup> respecting the great emperor's eternal state, all the old religious enthusiasm returned, and he gave himself up more unreservedly than ever to the severest discipline, and his fastings and vigils were rewarded by still more frequent visions. Meanwhile his talents brought him into general notice, and when the

<sup>1</sup> "De tanti itaque imperatoris excessu ipse nimio terrore atque horrore percussus, rursus cœpit ad se redire, et admonitionis sanctæ Dei Genitricis ad memoriam verba reducere." *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Palgrave's *N. and E.* I. 158.

<sup>3</sup> On the trances and dreams of Wetterius, the monk of Reichenau, who saw the great emperor punished in purgatorial Phlegethon, see Palgrave's *N. and E.* I. 162.



abbot founded another monastic outpost in Westphalia, in a beautiful valley on the west bank of the Weser, and called it New Corbey<sup>1</sup>, Anskar was removed to the new foundation, and with the common consent of all was elected to superintend its conventual school, and to preach to the neighbouring population.

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A.D. 826.

He was on a visit to Old Corbey, when the news arrived that a monk was earnestly required to accompany the Danish Harold to his native land, and that the abbot Wala had named him to the emperor as a fit person to be entrusted with the arduous mission. Summoned to the court, Anskar calmly but resolutely announced his willingness to go; in dreams and visions he had heard, he said, the voice of Christ Himself bidding him preach the Word to the heathen tribes, and nothing should induce him to shrink from the plain path of duty. In vain, therefore, on his return to his monastery, the brethren, learning that he was about to resign all his hopes and prospects to preach amongst heathens and barbarians, warned, protested, and even mocked at him for his madness. Immovable in his resolution to brave all risks, he began to prepare himself for his great enterprise, by prayer and the study of the Scriptures in the solitude of a neighbouring vineyard. So deep was the impression made by his devotion, that Autbert steward of the monastery, and a man of noble birth, when every one else hung back, declared that he could not find it in his heart to desert his friend, and was resolved to become his companion.

*Resolves to undertake the Danish Mission.*

*Joined by Autbert.*

A foretaste of the difficulties that awaited them was experienced at the outset. No one could possibly be prevailed on to accompany them as an attendant. The abbot himself shrunk from interposing his authority, and they were fain to set out alone. Before starting they had an

<sup>1</sup> *Historia Translationis S. Viti*, Pertz, II. 579. *Paschasii Radberti Vita S. Adelhardi*, Pertz, II. 531.

CHAP. XI.

A. D. 826.

*Accompanies  
Harold to  
Denmark.**Difficulties of  
the under-  
taking.*

audience of the Emperor, and received from him everything they were likely to need for the undertaking, in the shape of church-vessels, tents, and books, together with much exhortation to keep a watchful eye upon Harold and his retinue. From that Danish prince, however, they met with but little encouragement; neither he nor his nobles cared much for their company; and it was not till they arrived at Cologne, whence they were to pass by the Rhine to Holland, and so to Denmark, and where bishop Hadelbald bestowed upon them a ship with two cabins, that he evinced any desire to have much of their society. The better accommodation, however, promised by the use of a cabin, induced him to share the same vessel with Anskar, and the engaging manners of the missionary gradually won his respect, and inspired him with an interest in his undertaking. On landing, Anskar fixed his headquarters at Schleswig, and commenced the foundation of a school, purchasing or receiving from Harold Danish boys whom he hoped to train, so as to form the nucleus of a native ministry. Two years thus passed away, and some impression seemed to be made upon the people by the earnest self-devotion of the missionaries, when Autbert sickened, and was obliged to return to Corbey, where he died. Meanwhile the conversion of Harold, and still more his destruction of the native temples, was regarded by his subjects with the bitterest resentment<sup>1</sup>. A rebellion broke out, and the king was obliged to fly for refuge to the fief of Rustringia, within the ancient Frisick territory, which had been conceded to him by Louis; while Anskar also found it necessary to leave Schleswig, consoled by an unexpected opportunity of commencing a similar work under happier auspices in Sweden.

<sup>1</sup> Saxo Grammaticus, lib. IX. "Delubra diruit, victimarios proseripsit, flaminium abrogavit, atque inconditæ

patriæ Christianismi sacra primus intulit."

In the year 829 ambassadors from the latter country presented themselves at the court of Louis, and, after arranging the political object of their mission, announced that many of their countrymen were favourably disposed towards Christianity<sup>1</sup>. The commerce carried on, at this period, between Sweden and the port of Doerstadt, combined with the teaching of Christian captives, whom the Swedes had carried off in their piratical excursions, had predisposed a considerable number towards lending a favourable ear to Christian teachers. The Emperor gladly embraced the opportunity, Anskar was summoned to the palace<sup>2</sup>, and, after an interview with Louis, declared his entire willingness to undertake the enterprise.

A monk, named Gislema, was, therefore, left with Harold, and Anskar having found a new companion in Witmar, a brother-monk of Corbey, set out in the year 831 with presents from Louis for the king of Sweden. But the voyage was most disastrous. The missionaries had not proceeded far, when they were attacked by pirates; a fierce battle ensued, and their crew, though at first victorious, were overpowered in a second engagement, and barely escaped to land. The pirates plundered them of everything; the presents for the king, their own books, and ecclesiastical vestments, all were lost. In this forlorn and destitute condition they reached Birka, a haven and village on the Mälar lake, not far from the ancient capital Sigtuna, where rich merchants resided, and where was the centre of the Northern trade. Here they were hospitably welcomed by the king, Biörn "of the Hill," and received free permission to preach and baptize. The nucleus of a Church was found already existing in the persons of many Christian captives, who had long been deprived of the consolation of Christian ordinances. The work therefore commenced under fair auspices, and before

CHAP. XI.

A. D. 829.

*Missionary efforts in Sweden.*

*Anskar sails thither.*

A. D. 831.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. ix.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

CHAP. XI.

A.D. 832.

long, Herigar the king's counsellor, announced himself a convert, and erected a church on his estate<sup>1</sup>. After an interval of a year and a half, Anskar returned to the court of Louis, with a letter from the king of Sweden, and announced all that had befallen him. Thereupon the Emperor resolved without further delay to give effect to the ecclesiastical plans formed by his father, and to make Hamburg an archiepiscopal see, and a centre of operations for the Northern missions<sup>2</sup>. Anskar was accordingly elevated to the archiepiscopal dignity, and was consecrated at Ingelhiem, by Drogo of Mayence, and other prelates. At the same time, because of the poverty of the diocese, and the dangers to which the mission would be inevitably exposed, the monastery of Turholt in Flanders, between Bruges and Ypres, was assigned to him as a place of refuge, and a source of revenue. Then he was directed to repair to Rome, where he received the pall from Gregory IV., and was regularly authorized to preach the Gospel to the Northern nations<sup>3</sup>.

*Anskar visits Rome. Receives the pall from Gregory IV.*

A.D. 834.

These arrangements made, Anskar returned from Rome. Ebbo, who had been associated with him in the commission to evangelise the North, deputed his missionary office to his nephew Gauzbert, who was raised to the episcopal dignity, and as coadjutor to Anskar was entrusted specially with the Swedish mission<sup>4</sup>. Thither, accordingly, Gauzbert, who had received the name of Simon, set out, received a hearty welcome from Biörn and his people, and laid the foundation of a church at Sigtuna. Meanwhile Anskar had gone to Hamburg, and in pursuance of his

*Gauzbert entrusted with the Swedish Mission.*

*Anskar repairs to Hamburg.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xi.

<sup>2</sup> "In ultima Saxonie regione trans Alliam in civitate Hammaburg sedem constituit archiepiscopalem, cui subjaceret universa Northalbingorum ecclesia, et ad quam pertineret omnium regionum aquilonalium potestas ad constituendos epi-

scopos sive presbyteros, in illas partes pro Christi nomine destinandos."

*Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xii. Latham's *Taciti Germania*, c. xii.

<sup>3</sup> Jaffé's *Regesta Pont. Rom.* p. 228. Adam. Brem. i. 18.

<sup>4</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xiv.

former plan, bought or redeemed from slavery a number of Danish and Slavonic youths, whom he either educated himself, or sent for that purpose to the monastery of Turholt. But the times were hardly ripe for successful operations. Three years had barely elapsed, when an enormous army of Northmen, led by Eric, king of Jutland, attacked Hamburg, and, before relief could arrive, sacked and burned it, together with the church and monastery which Anskar had erected with great trouble. He himself had barely time to save the sacred relics, and before the sun went down, saw every external memorial of his mission reduced to ashes<sup>1</sup>. “*The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord,*” was the pious exclamation of the archbishop, as he surveyed the scene of desolation. Driven from Hamburg, he wandered for a long time over his devastated diocese, followed by a few of his clergy and scholars, and at length sought refuge at Bremen; but the envious bishop Leutbert refusing to receive him, he was fain to avail himself of the hospitality of a noble lady in the district of Holstein. And, as if this was not enough, he now received intelligence that, owing to similar risings of the Northmen, the hopes of the Swedish mission were utterly crushed<sup>2</sup>. The pagan party had conspired against the bishop Gauzbert, expelled him from the country, and murdered his nephew Nithard. But divine vengeance, we are assured, did not fail to pursue the conspirators. One of them had carried home some of the property of the missionaries. Before long he died together with his mother and sister, and his father found his goods wasting away from day to day. Alarmed at this sudden reverse of fortune, he began to consider what god he could have offended to bring all these trou-

CHAP. XI.

A.D. 834.

A.D. 837.

*Rising of the  
Norsemen.*

*Expulsion of  
Anskar,*

*and Gauzbert.*

<sup>1</sup> Adam. Brem. I. 23. Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, I. 441.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

bles on his house. Unable to settle the difficulty himself, he had recourse to a soothsayer. The lots were cast, and it was found that none of the native deities bore him any ill-will. At length the soothsayer explained the difficulty. "It is the God of the Christians," said he, "that is the author of thy ruin; there is something dedicated to Him concealed in thy house, and therefore all these evils have come upon thee, nor canst thou escape so long as that sacred thing remains unrestored<sup>1</sup>." After vainly trying, for some time, to comprehend what this could mean, the other suddenly recollected the day when his son had brought home from the spoil of the Christians' dwellings, one of their sacred books. Stricken with alarm, he immediately called together the inhabitants of the town, told them all that had occurred, and prayed their advice in the emergency. Every one declined to receive the terrible relic, and at last, fearful of further vengeance if he retained it in his house, the man covered it carefully and then fastened it to a stake on the public road, with a notice that any one who wished might take it down, and that for the crime he had unwittingly been guilty of against the Christians' God, he was ready to offer any satisfaction that might be required. One of the native Christians took it down, and the man's terrors were appeased.

Anskar, meanwhile, was still wandering over his desolated diocese. Even the monastery of Turholt, which Louis had bestowed upon him for the very purpose of being a covert from storms like these, was closed against him, having been bestowed upon a layman by Charles the Bald. Most men would have sunk under such accumulated disappointments, but Anskar waited patiently in hope of some change, and comforted himself with the

*Anskar's  
patience.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xviii. "Christus," inquit, "sic te habet perditum; et quia quodlibet illorum, quod illi consecratum fuerat, in

domo tua manet reconditum, invenerunt te omnia mala hæc quæ perpessus es, nec poteris ab his liberari, donec illud in domo tua manserit."

words of archbishop Ebbo shortly before his death; "Be assured, brother," said that prelate, "that what we have striven to accomplish for the glory of Christ will bring forth fruit in the Lord. For it is my firm and settled belief, nay, I know of a surety, that though what we have undertaken amongst these nations is subject, for a time, to obstacles and difficulties, on account of our sins, yet it will not be lost or perish altogether, but will, by God's grace, thrive and prosper, until the name of the Lord is made known to the furthest ends of the earth<sup>1</sup>." And, before long, events occurred which seemed to promise that the clouds would roll away, and a brighter epoch be inaugurated to cheer the heart of the Apostle of the North.

A.D. 844.

*He sends Ardgar to Sigtuna.*

Mindful of the converted chief Herigar, he had sent Ardgar, an anchorite in holy orders, to Sigtuna, with directions to see how he fared, and to strengthen him against falling back into heathenism. Thither, therefore, Ardgar set out, and was rejoiced to find Herigar still remaining faithful to the religion he had embraced. The recollection of the divine vengeance, which had attended the previous outbreak, protected the missionary from injury, and the new king who had succeeded Biörn was persuaded by Herigar to permit Ardgar to preach the Gospel without fear of molestation. That chief was no half-hearted believer, and openly confronted the malice of the pagan party. On one occasion, as they were boasting of the power of their gods, and of the many blessings they had received by remaining faithful to their worship, and were reviling him as a traitor and an apostate, he bade them put the matter to an open and decisive proof. "If there be so much doubt," said he, "concerning the superior might of our respective gods, let us decide by miracles whose power is greatest, whether that of the many ye call gods, or of my one Omnipotent Lord, Jesus Christ. Lo,

*Herigar's constancy.*

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxxiv.

CHAP. XI.

A. D. 844.

the season of rain is at hand. Do ye call upon the name of your gods, that the rain may be restrained from falling upon you; and I will call upon the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, that no drop of rain may fall on me; and the God that answereth our prayers, let him be God." The heathen party agreed, and, repairing to a neighbouring field, took their seats in great numbers on one side, while Herigar, attended only by a little child, sat on the other. In a few moments the rain descended in torrents, drenched the heathens to the skin, and swept away their tents, while on Herigar and the little child, we are assured, no drop fell, and even the ground around them remained dry. "Ye see," he cried, "which is the true God; bid me not, then, desert the faith I have adopted, but rather lay aside your own errors, and come to a knowledge of the truth<sup>1</sup>."

*Conflict of  
Christianity  
and Paganism.*

Another instance recorded by the biographer of Anskar is deserving of attention, because it illustrates some of the motives which induced many at this period to exchange heathenism for Christianity. On one occasion the town of Birka was attacked by a piratical expedition of Danes and Swedes, under the command of a king of Sweden, who had been expelled from his realm. The place was closely invested, and there seemed to be no prospect of a successful defence. In their alarm the townspeople offered numerous sacrifices to their gods, and, when all other means failed, collected such treasures as they possessed, together with a hundred pounds of silver, and succeeded in coming to terms with the hostile chiefs. But their followers, not satisfied with the amount, prepared to storm the town. Again the gods were consulted, the altars raised, the victims offered, and with equally unpromising results. Herigar now interposed, rebuked the people for their obstinate adherence to gods that could not profit, or aid them in their trouble;

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xix.



and when they bade him suggest some device, and promised to follow his counsel, he bade them make a vow of obedience to the Lord God Omnipotent, assured that if they turn to Him, He, at any rate, would not fail them in this hour of danger. The people took his advice, went forth into an open plain, and there solemnly vowed to keep a fast in honour of the God of the Christians, if He would rescue them from their enemies. Help came in an unexpected fashion. The Swedish king, while the army were clamouring for the signal to attack, suggested that the gods should be consulted by lot whether it was their will that Birka should be destroyed. "There are many great and powerful deities there," said he; "there also, formerly, a church was built, and even now the worship of the Great Christ is observed by many, and He is more powerful than any other of the gods, and is ever ready to aid those that put their trust in Him<sup>1</sup>. We ought, then, to inquire whether it be the divine will that we attack the place." Accordingly the lots were cast, and it was discovered that the auspices were not favourable for the assault, and thus Birka was spared. The arrival, therefore, of Ardgar was well-timed; he was warmly welcomed by Herigar, and the Christian party were strengthened in their adherence to the faith<sup>2</sup>.

Nor was it in Sweden only that the prospects of the missionaries brightened. In 847 Leutbert, the bishop of Bremen, died. Anskar's own see of Hamburg was now reduced, by the desolating inroads of the Northmen, to four "baptismal churches<sup>3</sup>." It was therefore proposed that

*Union of the  
sees of Bremen  
and Hamburg.*

<sup>1</sup> We have other illustrations of the way in which the Christian's God was only regarded as a new Avatar, "a higher power than the old gods." In Iceland, Kodran refused to be baptized till he had seen a trial of strength between the bishop and a sacred stone in the neighbourhood. The bishop intoned Church-hymns

over it 'till it split in two. *Kristni-Saga*, cap. II. quoted in Pearson's *Early and Middle Ages of England*, 101.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xix.

<sup>3</sup> "Non nisi quattuor baptismales habebat ecclesias diœcesis, et hæc ipsa multoties jam barbarorum incursionibus devastata." *Vita*, c. xxii.

CHAP. XI.

A.D. 849.

the see of Bremen should be annexed to the archbishopric of Hamburg, and, after some difficulty, the plan was matured, and Anskar found himself no longer hampered by want of means from devoting himself to the wider planting of the faith. At the same time he found himself able to appoint a priest over the church at Schleswig, and from Horik, king of Jutland, he no longer experienced opposition in preaching the word amongst the people. Thereupon many who had received the rite of baptism at Hamburg and Doerstadt, but had secretly conformed to idolatry, publicly professed their adhesion to the Christian faith, and rejoiced in the opportunity of joining in Christian fellowship<sup>1</sup>. The trade also of Doerstadt prospered by the change; Christian merchants flocked thither in greater numbers, and with greater confidence, and thus helped forward the work of the missionaries.

A.D. 850.

At this juncture the hermit Ardgar returned from Sweden. Anskar, more than ever unwilling that the mission there should be allowed to droop, tried to prevail on Gauzbert to revisit the scene of his former labours. But the latter, discouraged by his previous failure, declined, and the "Apostle of the North" finding no one else willing to undertake the work, once more girded up his loins, and encouraged by Horik<sup>2</sup>, who gave him letters to Olaf, king of Sweden, and deputed attendants to accompany him, set out for Birka. The time of his landing was unfortunate. The heathen party had been roused by the native priests, and a crusade was preached against the strange doctrines. Suborning a man who pretended to have received a mes-

*Anskar again  
visits Sweden.*

<sup>1</sup> There were defects, however, as might be expected. "Libenter quidem signaculum crucis [= *Primsigang*] recipiebant, ut catechumeni fierent, quo eis ecclesiam ingredi et sacris officiis interesse liceret, baptismi tamen perceptionem differebant, hoc sibi domum dijudicantes, ut in fine

vitæ suæ baptizarentur, quatinus purificati lavaacro salutari, puri et immaculati vitæ æternæ januas absque aliqua retardatione intrarent." *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxiv. See also *Quarterly Review*, No. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxvi.

sage from the native deities, the priests announced that it was the will of heaven, if the people wished for new gods, to admit their departed king Eric into their company, and to allow divine honours to be paid to him. To such a pitch of frenzy had the feelings of the populace been brought, that the retinue of the archbishop pronounced it absolute madness to persevere in his undertaking.

But Anskar was not to be thus thwarted. He invited Olaf to a banquet, set before him the presents sent by the king of Jutland, and announced the object of his visit. Olaf, for his part, was not indisposed to make the concessions he desired, but, as former missionaries had been expelled from the country, and there was danger of a revulsion of feeling, he suggested that it would be well to submit the affair once for all to the solemn decisions of the sacred lots, and consult in open council the feelings of the people. Anskar agreed, and a day was fixed for deciding the momentous question. First the council of the chiefs were formally asked their opinion. They craved the casting of the lots. This omen was taken, and was favourable to the admission of the archbishop and his retinue. This was announced to Anskar by one of the chiefs, who bade him be of good courage and play the man, for God plainly favoured his undertaking. Then the general assembly of the people of Birka was convened, and, at the command of the king, a herald proclaimed aloud the purport of the archbishop's visit. This was the signal for a great tumult, in the midst of which an aged chief arose, and, in the true spirit of Coifi the Northumbrian priest, thus addressed the assembly; "Hear me, O king and people. The god, whom we are invited to worship, is not unknown to us, nor the aid he can render to those that put their trust in him. Many of us have already proved this by experience, and have felt his assistance in many perils and especially on the

*The reception of Christianity decided by the sacred lots.*

*Speech of one of the chiefs in the assembly.*

sea<sup>1</sup>. Why, then, reject what we know to be useful and necessary for us? Not long ago some of us went to Dorstede, and believing that this new religion could profit us much, willingly professed ourselves its disciples. Now the voyage thither is beset with dangers, and pirates abound on every shore. Why, then, reject a religion thus brought to our very doors, which we went a long way before to seek? Why not permit the servants of a god, whose protecting aid we have already experienced, to abide amongst us? Listen to my counsel, then, O king and people, and reject not what is plainly for our advantage. We see our own deities failing us, and unable to aid us in time of danger; surely it is a good thing to enjoy the favour of a god who always and at all times can and will aid those that call upon him<sup>2</sup>."

*Permission  
given to preach  
at Birka.*

His words found favour with the people, and it was unanimously resolved that the archbishop should be permitted to take up his abode amongst them, and should not be hindered in disseminating the Christian faith. This resolution was announced to Anskar by the king in person, who further conceded a grant of land for building a church, and welcomed Erimburt, a colleague of the archbishop, whom the latter presented as the new director of the Swedish mission. Though the resolution of the assembly bound only the immediate neighbourhood of Birka, yet in other parts of the country a similar leaning in favour of the new faith was manifested, and the worship of Christ was allowed as a powerful Deity in war, and a tried Protector in all dangers<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In Mallet's *North. Antiquities* (p. 257), we find it recorded that on the voyage to Greenland the crew of a Norse vessel found a stranded whale—thereupon their leader exclaimed, "The redbear Thor has been more helpsome to us than your Christ. Seldom has my protector refused me anything that I have

asked him."

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxvii.

<sup>3</sup> We have a striking illustration of this in the expedition of Olaf against Courland, in 861. (*Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxx.) For nine days he fruitlessly attacked Pilten, and made no impression on the 15,000 warriors it sheltered. Recourse was

Meanwhile matters had retrograded in Denmark. Eric the Red, though not professedly a Christian, had, as we have seen, aided the archbishop in the introduction of Christianity. His apostasy provoked the inveterate hostility of the Northmen. The sea-kings determined to avenge the insults offered to their laws, their institutions, their national gods. Rallying from all quarters under the banner of Guthrun, the nephew of Eric, they attacked the apostate king near Flensburgh in Jutland. The battle raged for three days, and at its close Eric and Guthrun<sup>1</sup>, with "a cohort of Kings and Jarls," lay dead on the field; and so tremendous had been the slaughter that all the Viking nobility seemed to have been utterly exterminated. The new king, Eric II., easily persuaded by one of the pagan chiefs that the recent reverses were owing to the apostasy of his predecessor, ordered one of the churches to be closed, and forbade all further missionary operations. After a while, however, he was induced to change his policy, and Anskar, on his return from Sweden, was reinstated in the royal favour, and received a grant of land for the erection of a second church at Ripa, in Jutland, over which he placed Rimbert, a native priest, charging him to win the hearts of his barbarous flock by the sincerity and devotion of his life. The new king further evinced the change in

had to the lots, but no heathen deity was found willing to aid them. Then "quidam negotiatorum, memores doctrinæ institutionis domini Episcopi, suggerere eis cœperunt: 'Deus,' inquit, 'Christianorum multoties ad se clamantibus auxiliatur, et potentissimus est in adjuvando. Quæramus an ille nobiscum esse velit, et vota ei placita libenti animo spondeamus.' Omnium itaque rogatu supplicii missa est sors, et inventum, quod Christus eis vellet auxiliari. Quod cum publice denunciatum cunctis innotuisset, omnium corda ita subito roborata sunt, ut confestim ad urbem expugnandam intre-

pidi vellent accedere. 'Quid,' inquit, 'nunc vobis formidandum, quidne pavendum est? Christus est nobiscum; pugnemus, et viriliter agamus; nihil nobis obstare poterit, nec deerit nobis certa victoria, quia potentissimum Deorum nostri adiutorem habemus.'" The town fortunately capitulated.

<sup>1</sup> "Tanta cæde utrique mactati sunt, ut vulgus omne caderet, de stirpe autem regia nemo omnium remaneret, præter puerum unum, nomine Horicum." Adam. Brem. I. 30. *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxxi. Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, I. 449.

CHAP. XI.  
A. D. 856—865.

his sentiments by permitting, what had hitherto been strictly forbidden through fear of enchantment, the suspension of a bell in the church of Schleswig<sup>1</sup>.

*Anskar's efforts to check slavery.*

Anskar now returned to Hamburg, and devoted himself to the administration of his diocese. One of the last acts of his life was a noble effort to check the infamous practice of the slave-trade, which recalls the similar efforts of the Apostle of Ireland with the chief Coroticus. A number of native Christians had been carried off by the Northern pirates, and reduced to slavery. Effecting their escape, they sought refuge in the territory of North Albinga. Instead of sheltering the fugitives, some of the chiefs captured them again, and while they retained some as their own slaves, sold others to pagan and even professedly Christian tribes around. News of this reached Anskar, and, at the risk of his life, he determined to confront the guilty chiefs in person, and rebuke them for their cruelty. A vision of Christ, he declared, had prompted him to this resolve, and he carried his point. Sternly and dauntlessly he rebuked the chiefs, and succeeded in inducing them to set the captives once more free, and to ransom as many as possible from the bondage into which they had sold them<sup>2</sup>.

*Close of his life.*

A. D. 865.

This noble act formed an appropriate conclusion to his life. He was now more than sixty-four years of age, and during more than half that period had laboured unremittingly in the arduous mission-field of the North. His biographer expatiates eloquently on his character, as exhibiting the perfect model of ascetic perfection. Even when elevated to the episcopal dignity he never exempted himself from the rigid discipline of the cloister. He was robed in a hair-cloth shirt by night as well as by day; he measured out, at least in earlier youth, his food and drink

<sup>1</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxxii.  
“Insuper etiam quod antea nefandum paganis videbatur, ut clocca in eadem haberetur ecclesia, consensit.”

Adam. Brem. I. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Vita S. Anskarii*, cap. xxxviii.  
Adam. Brem. I. 31.

by an exact rule; he chanted a fixed number of Psalms when he rose in the morning, and when he retired to sleep at night. His charity was unbounded. A hospital at Bremen testified to his care of the sick and needy, and not only did he distribute a tenth of his income to the poor, and divide amongst them any presents he might receive, but every five years he tithed his income afresh that he might be sure the poor had their proper share. Whenever he went on a visitation tour of his diocese, he made a practice of never sitting down to dinner in any place without first ordering some of the poor to be brought in, and he himself, sometimes, would wash their feet and distribute amongst them bread and meat. Such a practical exhibition of Christian love could not fail to have a gradual influence even on the rough pirates of the North, and they testified their sense of the power he wielded over them by ascribing to him many miraculous cures. But he was not one to seek a questionable distinction of this kind. "One miracle," he once said to a friend, "I would, if worthy, ask the Lord to grant me, and that is that by His grace He would make me a good man." One source, however, of disquietude troubled his last hours. In vision he believed it had been intimated to him that he was destined to win the martyr's crown<sup>1</sup>. What sin of his had deprived him of this honour? In vain one of his most intimate pupils pointed out that it had not been distinctly intimated by what death he was to die, by the flame, or the sword, or shipwreck. In vain he recalled the hardships the archbishop had undergone, and the perils which had made his life a continual martyrdom. At length, his biographer informs us, another and a last vision assured him that his fears were groundless, that no sin of his had robbed him of the wished-for crown.

<sup>1</sup> In the vision related, so his biographer says, in the very words of Anskar himself, he declares that a voice from the highest heavens had

bidden him, "Go, return hither, crowned with martyrdom." *Vita S. Anskarii*, II. 3.

## CHAP. XI.

A. D. 865.

*His death.**Difficulties of  
his successor  
Rimbert.*

A. D. 865—338.

A. D. 934.

*Harold Blaata-  
tand.*

Thus comforted, he busied himself with arranging the affairs of his diocese, and after dictating a letter, in which he earnestly commended the Northern mission to the care of the Emperor, calmly expired on the 3rd of February, 865.

That Anskar's success was partial, and confined to narrow limits, was the natural result of the times in which he lived. The whole North was in confusion. His successor Rimbert contrived to keep the flickering spark alive, but was sadly impeded by incursions of Northmen and Slaves; nor could any permanent impression be made on the great mass of heathen barbarism till Henry I. established, in the year 934, the Mark of Schleswig as a protection for Germany from the constant inroads of the Northmen. When the work commenced so nobly by Anskar was resumed, its effect was limited, to a great extent, to the Danish mainland, while the islanders long persisted in their old rites, and still continued, in some places, to offer human sacrifices. In many places the princes continued pagan, and, when they did profess a change of sentiments in religious matters, there was no telling how long the change might last, originating, as it too often did, in low motives, and based on the temporal advantages afforded by the rival faiths. Thus Henry I. extorted from king Gorm a promise not to molest the Christians, and archbishop Unni repaired to the new Christian colony in Schleswig, hoping to produce some effect on the Danish chief. But all his efforts were of no more avail than those of Willibrord or Boniface on Radbod. The influence of his mother, the sagacious and renowned Thyra, over the mind of her grim-visaged son Harold, surnamed "Blaatatand" or "Black-Tooth," enabled the archbishop to obtain from that prince, when associated in the government with his father, permission to travel in every part of Denmark, and extend a knowledge of Christianity<sup>1</sup>. But it was not

<sup>1</sup> On Harold Blaataand, see Palgrave's *Normandy and England*, II. 277. Snorro Sturleson, I. 393.



till the year 972, that, after an unsuccessful war with the Emperor Otho I., Harold consented to be baptized. The presence of Otho graced his reception into the Christian Church, but the circumstances which had won his respect for the Christian faith as contrasted with his old national gods, did not augur well for his fidelity. According to an old tradition he was once visited by a priest, named Poppo, from North Friesland. At a banquet, where Poppo was a guest, the conversation turned on the then much debated question of the superiority of the old and the new religions. The Danes asserted that "the White Christ" was indeed a mighty God, but their deities were mightier, and could perform more wonderful works. Thereupon Poppo declared that Christ was the only true God, and declaimed against the deities of the country as no better than evil spirits. Harold quietly asked the missionary if he was willing in his own person to put the question to the test. Poppo declared his perfect readiness, and was kept in ward till the morrow. Harold, meanwhile, ordered a mass of iron to be heated red-hot, and then bade the champion of the new faith take it up and carry it. Poppo, we are assured, complied with the suggestion with undaunted resolution; and the astonished king, perceiving that his hand suffered no harm, and convinced thenceforward of the superiority of the Christians' God, ordered due honour to be paid to His ministers, and declared the national deities unworthy to be compared with Him<sup>1</sup>. From this time he continued to regard Christianity with more or

*Story of Poppo.*

<sup>1</sup> The story is related in Widukind, III. 65, (Pertz, v. 463), also in Thietmar, *Chronicon*, II. 8, and a similar story, though, as it seems, of a different Poppo, is told in Adam. Brem. II. 33; where see Dahlmann's note. In the latter case, however, it was the Christian's brave endurance rather than a miraculous exemption from pain which won

the monarch's attention, "liquentes flammas tam patienter sustinuit, ut veste prorsus combusta et in favillam redacta hilari et jocundo vultu nec fumum incendii se sensisse testatus est." On the question of the credibility of these conflicting traditions, see Neander, v. 397. A bishop Poppo is mentioned as instructing king Harold in Snorro, I. 393.

CHAP. XI.  
A. D. 941-990.

*Apostasy of  
Sveno.*  
A. D. 991-1014.

*His death in  
England.*  
A. D. 1018.

less favour; but the rough methods he adopted, in the spirit of Peter the Great, to check the rude passions of his people, can scarcely be said to have aided Adaldag, archbishop of Hamburg and Bremen, in his efforts to spread the faith. He succeeded, however, in consecrating several Danish bishops, and thus hoped to open up other centres of missionary activity<sup>1</sup>. But the battle between heathenism and Christendom was not yet ended. Harold's own son, Sweno, headed the rebellious heathen faction, and the grim-visaged king perished in the unnatural contest. Seated on the throne, Sweno commenced a crusade against the professors of the faith in which he himself had been educated, expelled the Christian priests, and re-established the pagan party. But his eye was fixed on the fair lands of England, where his atrocities exceeded all that ever before had been committed by the Northmen. Wasted fields, plundered churches, blazing villages, pillaged monasteries, marked his progress, and the final close of the great migration of nations which, as Lappenberg remarks<sup>2</sup>, these Danish invasions may be regarded, was signalised by atrocities to which history affords few parallels. Under circumstances like these it is no matter of surprise that the results of missionary labour in the North<sup>3</sup> were scanty, and its very footing precarious. Little that was permanent can be said to have been effected before the reign of Canute; and in the meantime it will be well to turn to the kingdom of Norway, before we touch upon the religious reforms of that great monarch.

<sup>1</sup> Adam. Brem. II. 15, sq.

<sup>2</sup> Lappenberg, II. 181.

<sup>3</sup> For seventy years after the death of Anskar Sweden was scarcely visited by the Christian missionary, and until the reign of Olaf the Lap-king (1015-1024) little was effected towards the propagation of Christianity. He introduced several German clergy, and many from England; of

the latter, Sigfrid, archdeacon of York, carried on missionary work for many years, and was consecrated to the see of Wexio. But reactions constantly occurred, nor was Christianity firmly established till the reign of King Inge in 1075. Robertson's *Church History*, II. 446. Gieseler, II. 451.





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